The Pelasgian origin of the Greek language

A study based on roots and suffixes of ancient Greek toponyms

Death Mask of Agamemnon[1]

Foreword 3
About the Pelasgians 5
Wide homogeneity of toponyms 8
Larissa 9
Apassa/Ephesos/Eivissa 10
Kanesh/Cannes/Kanethos 11
Kadesh/Cádiz/Chandax 12
Qurna/Kyrnos/Keryneia/A Coruña 13
Analysis of suffixes 18
The cluster *-nth-* 19
Words ending in *-inthos* 23
The cluster *-ss-/-tt-* 36
Toponyms of Attica ending in *-ssos/-ttos* 38
Rest of suffixes 41
Suffix *-si* 41
Suffix *-ros/-ra/-ri* 42

[1] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mask_of_Agamemnon]

Suffix -*mna*/-*nna* 46
Suffix -*kos*/-*pos*/-*tos* 51
Other suffixes 54
The generic suffix -*s* 56
Analysis of themes 61
The theme *ka(l)las/salas* 61
The theme *palos*/*polis* 64
The theme *arna* 67
Chronological succession of themes and suffixes 70
Analysis of toponyms 72
Argissa 73
Argos 73
Gortyna 74
Eleftherna 74
Eftresis 77
Ierapytna 77
Lerna 79
Oloura 80
Parnassos 82
Poliochne 83
Saliagos 84
Phylakope 84
Kherronesos 85
Thematic syllables 86
Were the Mycenaeans the first "Greeks?" 89
Elements from myths 90
Cadmus and Harmonia 90
Danaus and the Dardanians 91
Pelops and the Phrygians 93
Elements from Linear B 95
Elements from the Hittite texts 99
Attarsiyas and Madduwattas 99

Ahhiyawa and Arzawa 100
Was there ever "the coming of the Greeks?" 102
Conclusions 107
Appendix 110
The problem of linguistic continuity 110

Foreword

According to *Wikipedia*, scholars find that place names provide valuable information about the historical geography of a particular area. Characteristically, according to historian F.T. Wainwright, the study of place names "uses, enriches and tests the discoveries of archaeology and history and the rules of philologists". Place names not only depict patterns of ethnic settlements, but can also help identify distinct periods of migration.[2]

This can be achieved by analyzing place names based on Strabo's *Geography*. For example, we can start our course from *Argissa* in Thessaly, the area of which has been inhabited since the 7th millennium BC, and reach *Argos* in the Peloponnese, which has been continuously inhabited since the 5th millennium BC. I searched for a toponym with a similar root *arg-* from an intermediate location in Central Greece, which has been inhabited since the 6th millennium BC, but I found none (there is *Argithea* in Attica, for example, but it is not known exactly when it was first inhabited). However, Attica has been inhabited since at least the beginning of the Neolithic period. The most important settlement, that of Nea Makri, dates back to the earliest Neolithic period.[3]

[2] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Toponymy]

[3] [https://www.emena.gr/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/%CE%9A%CE%B1%CE%BA%CE%B1%CE%B2%CE%BF%CE%B3%CE%B9%CE%AC%CE%BD%CE%BD%CE%B7-%CE%8C%CE%BB%CE%B3%CE%B1-%CE%97-%CE%BA%CE%B1%CF%84%CE%BF%CE%AF%CE%BA%CE%B9%CF%83%CE%B7-%CF%84%CE%B7%CF%82-%CE%9D.%CE%91.-%CE%91%CF%84%CF%84%CE%B9%CE%BA%CE%AE%CF%82-%CE%BA%CE%B1%CF%84%CE%AC-%CF%84%CE%B7%CE%BD-%CF%80%CF%81%CE%BF%CF%8A%CF%83%CF%84%CE%BF%CF%81%CE%B9%CE%BA%CE%AE-

In any case, when the Neolithic revolution passed from Argissa in Thessaly to Argos in the Peloponnese, at the same time it spread from Eastern to Western Europe, and from the Near East to the Pontic Steppes, bringing with it the first words about the field (*agros*), irrigation (*ardefsis*), the land (*aroura*), i.e. using words with roots *ar(g)-/a(g)r-*, which are contained in the two aforementioned toponyms (*Arg-issa* and *Arg-os*). Why should we assume that these toponyms, and the corresponding roots, are "pre-Greek?"

The suffix -*issa* contained in *Argissa*, as well as the suffix -*inthos* contained in *Korinthos* (Corinth) are considered pre-Greek by many modern linguists. We will see, however, that these suffixes, like others, arise smoothly from within the Greek language, and that they evolved into the more familiar suffixes -*sos*/-*tos*/-*thos*, or -*os*/-*a*/-*on* for the three genders (masc./fem./neut., respectively).

We will also examine themes, such as *ka(l)las*/*salas*, *palos*/*polis*, or *arna*, that appear in a variety of place names and common words. If all these themes, roots and suffixes are "pre-Greek", we should conclude that the Greek language is also "pre-Greek", which is absurd.

On the other hand, if we can show that place names and common words that bear the so-called "pre-Greek" suffixes have roots that can be etymologized in the Greek language, then the suffixes will also be Greek. This is what causality dictates, unless, of course, the "Pelasgian Pre-Greeks" came after the "Indo-European Greeks".

My personal assessment is that the Greek language, with a basic vocabulary, had already begun to be spoken from the Neolithic period in Greece (perhaps even earlier if part of the vocabulary from the Paleolithic period has survived). In any case, the language must have already acquired a relatively complete form at the end of the Neolithic period- beginning of the Bronze Age (e.g. 3800-3200 BC). In other words, when the peoples of the Steppes, i.e. the so-called IE (Indo-Europeans), arrived in Greece, whether they came during the aforementioned period or later at the

%CF%80%CE%B5%CF%81%CE%AF%CE%BF%CE%B4%CE%BF.-%CE%9D%CE%AD%CE%B1-%CE%B5%CF%85%CF%81%CE%AE%CE%BC%CE%B1%CF%84%CE%B1..pdf]

beginning of the 2nd millennium BC, the language, to some significant extent, would have already been spoken.

About the Pelasgians

With the term *Pelasgos* (*Πελασγός*= Pelasgian) the Ancient Greeks referred to all the neighboring peoples of their time, or of previous eras, who spoke unknown languages. In the *Iliad* they are referred to as allies of the Trojans. In the *Odyssey* they are mentioned as living in Crete. In the *Iliad*, Achilles prays to Dodonian Zeus Pelasgos, and Pelasgian Argos is referred to as Thessalian Argos, the original residence of the Greeks. Herodotus contrasts the Pelasgians with the Greeks, but the Pelasgians are identified with the Greeks in Euripides.[4]

In the *LSJ* dictionary (*Liddell, Scott, Jones Ancient Greek Lexicon*), the term "Pelasgian" is identified with the word "Thessalian" (inhabitant of Thessaly).[5]

Strabo characteristically says:
"And that part of Thessaly between the exit of Pineios and Thermopylae, up to the mountains of Pindos, is called Pelasgian Argos, as the area formerly belonged to the Pelasgians."[6]

And he adds:
"Almost everyone agrees that the Pelasgians were an ancient race that spread throughout Greece, but especially in the land of the Aeolians near Thessaly."[7]

With respect to the etymology of the name *Pelasgos*, it is probably related to the root *pel-* (*πελ-*), from which comes the verb *pelo*/*pelomai* (*πέλω*/*πέλομαι*), which is related to the IE root *kwel-* "to

[4] [https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.04.0058%3Aentry%3D*pelasgo%2Fs]

[5] [https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.04.0058%3Aentry%3D*pelasgiko%2Fs]

[6] Strabo, *Geographica* (9.5.5).

[7] Strabo, *Geographica* (5.2.4).

turn, to move around". The root has also the meaning of "to be, to exist", and "to deal with something", which occurs in the compound words in *-polos* (*-πόλος*). This verb is associated with the ancient Indian *carati* "to turn", as well as the Latin *colo*, "to cultivate, to inhabit" (e.g. *agricola* 'farmer', *incola* 'resident').[8] There was even Zeus *Pelorios* (*Πελώριος*), who was worshipped in ancient Thessaly, while the *peloria* (*πελώρια*) was the great celebration of the harvest that took place in his honor.[9]

In this case, the name *Pelasgos* would have the meaning of the first inhabitant, the first cultivator of the land, i.e. the "native one". What is important, however, is that this name can be etymologized in the Greek language. In other words, if the Pelasgians identified themselves with this name, then they themselves would have been Proto-Greeks, not Pre-Greeks.

According to traditions, the first Pelasgians settled in Thessaly. This is where the myth of Deucalion and Pyrrha comes from. Their son was Hellen (Έλλην). Hellen's children were Aeolus, Doros and Xouthos. The children of the latter were Achaeus and Ion.

In the *Iliad*, Hellas and Hellenes were the names of the tribe from Thessaly that settled in Phthia, led by Achilles. Also, according to Hesiod, from the union of Hellen's sister, Pandora, with Zeus, Graikos (Γραικός) was born.[10]

Regarding Phthia, Strabo says:
"Some suppose that (Phthia) is the same as Greece and Achaia, and that these regions form the southern part in the division of Thessaly into two parts. Others, however, distinguish Phthia from Hellas."[11]

[8] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CF%80%CE%AD%CE%BB%CF%89]

[9] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CF%80%CE%B5%CE%BB%CF%8E%CF%81%CE%B9%CE%BF%CF%82]

[10] [https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%88%CE%BB%CE%BB%CE%B7%CE%BD]

[11] Strabo, *Geographica* (9.5.3).

Ancient Phthia was inhabited by the Phthiotes Achaeans. This region, according to Strabo, included the southern part of Thessaly, extending from the Malian Gulf in the east, to Dolopia and Pindos in the west, and north to Pharsalos (modern Farsala) and the Thessalian plain.[12]

As far as Graea (Γραία) is concerned, it was placed in Boeotia, as mentioned in Homer's *Ship List* in the *Iliad*. It seems that it included the city of Oropos. According to Pausanias, the name was considered an abbreviation of the original name Tanagraia (Ταναγραία). Graia was a wider area that included Aulis, Mykalissos, Arma, etc.[13]

So we see that traditions want the first Pelasgians to settle in Thessaly, and from there to move further south to Central Greece, from where the ethnonyms "Hellen" and "Graikos" (Greek) originated.

This view seems to be reinforced by archaeological and genetic research, according to which the first farmers came to Europe from Anatolia and the Middle East at the beginning of the Neolithic period.[14]

We can consider that the Greek language evolved from a Pelasgian language or a Pelasgian linguistic continuum which was spoken in the area where the first Pelasgians settled during the Neolithic period, i.e. in Thessaly, and that this language then spread further south, in Central Greece and the Peloponnese.

We will see later on that there are indications for this hypothesis due to toponyms of prehistoric times from Greece, whose names have survived and can be etymologized in the Greek language. *Argissa*, for example, which was first inhabited during the 7th millennium BC, contains the root *arg-*/*agr-*, as we have already mentioned, which the word *agros* (field) comes from. In other words, we see a Pelasgian word which may have been preserved in the modern Greek language since the Neolithic period.

[12] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Achaea_Phthiotis]

[13] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Graea]

[14] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Early_European_Farmers]

Wide homogeneity of toponyms

A common feature of the toponyms we will examine is their wide distribution and interchangeability. Some of the place names, with any variations, are spread throughout the Mediterranean and Asia Minor, but are also found deep in Asia (today's India and Pakistan), as well as in the Middle East.

We have, for example, from Strabo's *Geography* the following variations:

Argos in the Peloponnese, *Arginoussai* (islands). Also, today's *Argissa* and *Argithea* (in Thessaly and Attica respectively).
Agyra from Celtica, *Agylla* from Italy (present Cerveteri), *Agyra* from Asia Minor (today's Ankara).
Mylai from Italy, *Mylasa* from Asia. There was also *Miletos* (Miletus) in Asia Minor, as well as the modern *Milesi* in Attica.
Kalydon (in Aetolia), *Kalydnai* (islands), *Kalymna* (the island of Kalymnos). There was also *Kalynda*, in ancient Caria.
Gortyn in Crete. We also have *Kroton* and *Kortona* (the Etruscan city of *Curtuna*) in Italy.
Leben in Crete, *Lebinthos* (the island of Lebitha), *Lebadeia* (modern Libadeia), *Lebedos* in Asia, *Leibithra* in Macedonia. *Nabrissa* in Spain (today's *Lebrija*) is also mentioned.
Mycenae (modern Mycenae), *Maekene* (perhaps *Meknes* in Morocco). Also, *Mykonos* (island) *Mycale* and *Mykalissos* from Asia Minor.
Parnassos, *Parnes* (mount Parnitha). Also today's *Parnon* in the Peloponnese.

A characteristic of these toponyms is that they contain the same or similar roots, with different suffixes. For example, the toponyms *Leben, Lebinthos*, *Lebedos,* even *Lebadeia*, contain suffixes of the form *-en*/*-nthos*/*-(n)dos*, and so on, with the same root *leb-* repeated.

In the toponyms *Kalydon*, *Kalydnai*, *Kalymna*, the same root *kal-* appears with suffixes *-don*/*-dna*, and *-mna*, respectively. In the toponyms *Mylai*, *Mylasa*, *Miletos* and *Milesi*, we have suffixes in -

a(i), -a(s)sa, *-(t)tos*, *-(e)si*, and so on. In the toponyms *Agyra* and *Agylla* we have a pair of suffixes *-ra* or *-(l)la*. We will examine all these suffixes separately below.

Most of these suffixes have been classified as "pre-Greek". The problem, however, is that there are no other suffixes in the Greek language. In fact, we will show below that the same suffixes evolved into the most well-known suffixes of the Greek language. We will also show that many of these themes or roots can have a Greek etymology. The root *kal-*/*sal-*, for example, is related to the sea (*thalassa*), or water in general, and appears in a multitude of toponyms and common words, e.g. *Kallipolis*, *Kalabryta*, *Kalamos*, *thalassa* (sea), *alas* (salt), *salos* (stir, uproar), *saligari* (snail), and so on. In many cases, however, the etymology of the words has been lost, which is why they are characterized as "pre-Greek".

Here we will take a look at some place names, or groups of place names, separately:

Larissa

This toponym is repeated several times both in Greece and in Asia. Strabo characteristically says:

"Larissa is a place located on Ossa, and there is Larissa Kremaste, which is called Pelasgia by some. In Crete there is also a city of Larissa, whose inhabitants were integrated with those of Ierapytna, and that is why the plain below is called the plain of Larissa. In the Peloponnese the acropolis of the Argives is called Larissa, and there is a river Larisos, which separates Eleia from Dyme. Theopompos mentions a city of Larissa, located on the immediate borders of this region. In Asia there is Larissa Frikonis near Kyme, and another Larissa near Amaxitos, in Troas. There is also Larissa in Ephesus, and a Larissa in Syria."[15]

According to *Wikipedia*, the area of Larissa in Thessaly has a long history of habitation, with evidence of continuous activity in Neolithic times (during the 7th millennium BC), and significant habitation during the Bronze Age, making it a historically rich region of Greece.[16]

[15] Strabo, *Geographica* (9.5.19)

[16] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Thessaly]

The name is thought to be derived from the Pelasgian language, meaning "fortress," explaining its common usage for fortified sites. The numerous toponyms "Larissa" in ancient Greece and Asia Minor reflect the spread of the Pelasgian civilization, with the name suggesting a strategically important fortified settlement.[17]

A characteristic of the city is the antiquity of its name, which corresponds to the long period of its habitation (from the beginning of the Neolithic period). Syllabic prefixes of the form *La* or *Le* will be found again later on in many other toponyms, as we will also separately examine the suffix -*(s)sa*. My opinion is that these are Pelasgian-Greek syllables, as they are abundant in the Greek language, they have existed at least since the Neolithic period, and have never been replaced.

Apassa/Ephesos/Eivissa

Ephesos (Ephesus) was an ancient Greek city in the region of Smyrna, in Asia Minor. It was built in the 10th century BC on the site of ancient *Apassa*, the capital of the Arzawa region, when the Hittite kingdom was located in the area. However, the area of Ephesus was inhabited since the 6th millennium BC.[18]

There is also *Apasa*, an islet east of Ithaca that is part of the Echinades Islands.[19] It is noteworthy that the name has survived to this day.

On the other hand, we have *Eivissa* (the Catalan name for *Ibiza*), one of the Pityusic Islands. In Strabo's *Geography*, the place is called *Ebusos* (*Ἔβυσος*). Phoenicians founded a port on the island

[17] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Larissa]

[18] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ephesus#:~:text=Ephesus%20(/%CB%88%C9%9Bf%C9%AA,Roman%20Republic%20in%20129%20BC.]

[19] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apasa_(Echinades)#:~:text=Apasa%20(Greek:%20%CE%86%CF%80%CE%B1%CF%83%CE%B1)%20is,it%20had%20no%20resident%20population.]

in 654 BC.[20] The name *Eivissa* is thought to be derived from the Arabic *Yabisah* (= land, continent), from the Latin *Ebusus*, which in turn came from the Phoenician *Iboshim*.[21]

However, *Apassa* in Asia Minor already existed, before the Phoenicians. This is why I gradually realized that such place names belong to an old linguistic substratum, which the Anatolians (Luwians and Hittites), the Greeks and the Phoenicians shared.

Kanesh/Cannes/Kanethos

From Strabo's *Geography* we have: *Canysion* (Canosa, Italy), *Cannai* (Italy), *Cane*/*Canai* (Asia Minor), *Kanethos* (Euboea, Greece). Also, apart from Strabo, we have modern *Cannes* (France), and ancient *Kanesh* (Asia Minor, today's Kültepe).

For *Canysion*, the origin of the name is uncertain. As for *Cane* in Asia Minor, Strabo says that it was founded by Locrians who had come from *Cynos* in eastern Greece.[22] As far as *Cannes* in France is concerned, it is believed that it was founded in the 2nd century BC by Ligurian Oxybii, and the original name was *Aigitna*. In the 10th century the city was known as *Canua*, probably derived from the word *canna* (reed).[23]

As far as the etymology of the Latin word *canna* is concerned, it is considered to come from the ancient Greek *κάννα*, which comes from the Akkadian *qanûm*.[24] However, as we will see later on, words with the same meaning, such as the word *kalamos* (which contains the theme *ka(l)las*), are probably of earlier origin.

---

[20] [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ibiza]

[21] [https://www.wisdomlib.org/names/ibiza#:~:text=Background%2C%20origin%20and%20meaning%20of,their%20first%20or%20last%20name.]

[22] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canae]

[23] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cannes#History].

[24] [https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/canna]

The oldest of this group of cognate toponyms is *Kanesh*. There is no Greek name for this toponym, as it was located in the depths of Asia Minor. This was the first capital of the Hittites during the 2nd millennium BC (under the names *Kanesh*, *Kanish*, or *Nesha*). However, Kanesh was already an important center by the beginning of the 3rd millennium BC.[25]

Kadesh/Cádiz/Chandax

The toponym *Kadesh* mainly refers to the ancient city in the region of present-day Syria, known primarily as the playground of the Battle of Kadesh (c. 1274 BC), between the Egyptians and the Hittites. The name is thought to be derived from the Semitic root *qds*, meaning "sacred", rendered as *Kinza* in Hittite, and with other variations in the wider region such as *Qidshu*, *Kidsha*, or *Gizza*. The Iron Age form of the name in Neo-Assyrian Akkadian is *Qadishu*, hence the Greek rendering *Kadessos*. Some scholars also identify Kadesh with the city *of Kadytes* mentioned by Herodotus. An alternative identification for the name is *Gaza*. The region of Kadesh was first inhabited during the Neolithic period (7th millennium BC), and, after a period of abandonment, the site was repopulated in the 3rd millennium BC.[26]

As far as *Cádiz* in Spain is concerned, traditionally, the foundation of the city dates back to at least the 9th century BC, and is attributed to the Phoenicians from Tyre, who named the city *Gadir*, or *Agadir*, meaning "wall, complex, or fortress". This name was prevalent in Northern African place names, such as *Agadir* in Morocco. The name is referred to in ancient Greek literature as *Gadeira*, with the later variant *Kadix*. In Latin the city was called *Gades*, then in Arabic *Qadis*, from which the Spanish *Cádiz* was derived.[27]

In Asia Minor there was also *Kadyanda*, near Telmessos in ancient Lycia. It is not mentioned by any ancient writer (with the possible exception of Pliny). The name reads as *Kadawanti* in Lycian inscriptions. Also, according to *Wikipedia*, due to the cluster *-nd-* in the name, it can be said that

[25] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/K%C3%BCltepe]

[26] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kadesh_(Syria)]

[27] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/C%C3%A1diz]

the history of the settlement dates back to the 3rd millennium BC. The oldest surviving ruins of the ancient city date to no more than the 5th century BC.[28]

Wikipedia claims that the city must date to before the 2nd millennium BC because the Luwians are thought to have entered Asia Minor at the beginning of that millennium, while toponyms containing the suffix -*anda*, corresponding to the Greek toponyms ending in -*inthos*, have been considered pre-IE. My own assessment is that these suffixes (therefore, to some extent, the corresponding place names) are Proto-Luwian and Proto-Greek. The reason will be explained below, where we analyze toponyms with the suffix -*inthos*, or the cluster -*nth*-.

According to *Google* also, in Eastern Thrace there was *Kadessos*, an ancient fortress city near Forty Churches (today's Kirklareli). I could not cross-check this information.

The toponym *Canaan*, or perhaps *Knossos*, is of similar morphology. Also, the older name of Heraklion in Crete, *Chandax* (from the Arabic *rabḍ al-ḫandaq*, where *rabḍ* means "suburb",[29] and *ḫandaq* means "moat"),[30] may correspond to an earlier name of the city.

In any case, this name (*Gades*, *Cadiz*, *Kadessos*, perhaps even *Chandax*) has been observed in the wider Mediterranean region since at least the 3rd millennium BC (from the time of *Kadesh* in Syria). One could say that in this case, as in that of *Kanesh*, *Ephesus*, or *Larissa*, these toponyms were carried by Semitic or Asia Minor populations along the Mediterranean. However, as we will see immediately below, similar place names have an even greater distribution, implying a greater range in space and depth in time.

Qurna/Kyrnos/Keryneia/A Coruña

Initially, I was aware of the coincidence, as far as the names are concerned, between *Korone* in Greece and *Coruña* in Spain. Then I learned from Strabo's *Geography* that *Kyrnos* was the old

[28] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cadyanda]

[29] [https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/%D8%B1%D8%A8%D8%B6]

[30] [https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/%C4%A7andaq]

name of Corsica. In Strabo we also have the toponyms *Keryneia* in Cyprus, *Kyrene* and *Alikyrna* in Greece, *Kyrenaia* in Libya, *Kyros* (Kura River) and *Kyra* city in Asia. We can also mention *Kyllene* in Greece, as well as the city *of Halicarnassus* in Asia Minor.

Because I understood that there was something deeper in the correlation between these place names (for example *Cyrene* in Libya was founded by Greeks, but the toponym has no direct etymology in Greek, and the same is true for the old name *Kyrnos* for Corsica, which was not a colony of the ancient Greeks), I searched the internet and found a city *Al-Qurnah* in Iraq, as well as another city *Qurna* in Egypt. Thus I discovered the wider distribution (and common origin) of similar place names.

As far as *Al-Qurnah* is concerned, it is a city in southern Iraq. Local folklore claims that it was the original site of the biblical paradise, the Garden of Eden. In Arabic, the name comes from the word *qarn* which means "thorn, corner, or union". The name describes the location of the city at the point where the rivers Tigris and Euphrates meet.[31]

Qurna in Egypt is a village on the banks of the Nile, in western Thebes, near the hills of the Valley of the Kings. According to *Wikipedia*, the name means "cape, or peak".[32]

As far as *Kyrene* in Libya is concerned, the name is of unknown origin. The ancient Greeks themselves attributed the name to the legendary Thessalian princess *Kyrene* who supposedly founded the city. Some modern scholars attribute the name of the city to its spring, which was called *Kyra*.[33] Above we saw place names such as the river *Kura* or the city *Kyra* in Asia.

Keryneia in Cyprus was also founded by Greeks at the end of the Mycenaean period. According to mythology, its settlers ended up there when they returned to their homeland from the Trojan War. The heroes gave the new city the name of their mother city *Keryneia*, which was located in

[31] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al-Qurnah]

[32] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kurna]

[33] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyrene,_Libya]

Achaia.[34] As far as the Greek *Keryneia* is concerned, its name according to Pausanias comes from an old settler of the city, or from the river *Kerynites* which flowed close to the city.[35]

As far as *Kyrnos* is concerned, the island was known to ancient navigators as early as the Mycenaean period. The name may come from a root *kors*- which in the Corsican language means "peak" according to Eustathios, or perhaps *krs*-, which means "head".[36] According to another version, the original name may have been *Syrnos*, so the island may be associated with the *Seirinousses*, the island of the Sirens mentioned in Homer's *Odyssey*.[37]

Regarding our discussion, the variant *Syrnos*, instead of *Kyrnos*, is interesting, because it will let us include below other toponyms that show the same variation (with the exchange between *k* and *s*).

As for *A Coruña* in Spain, the etymology of the name is uncertain. Some consider that the name comes from the Latin *caronium*, which means "horn", with reference to the cape of the city, probably of Phoenician origin. Another version associates the name with the Latin *corona* (crown).[38]

In the second version we can include the city *of Korone* in Greece, as, according to Pausanias, the name comes from a bronze crown (coin with a crow as a badge), found during the construction of the city walls.[39] In the first version of the above etymology we can include *Kyllene*, where, according to *Google*, the name comes from an older toponymic root that refers to "mountain".

---

[34] [https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%9A%CE%B5%CF%81%CF%8D%CE%BD%CE%B5%CE%B9%CE%B1]

[35] [https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%9A%CE%B5%CF%81%CF%8D%CE%BD%CE%B5%CE%B9%CE%B1_(%CE%B1%CF%81%CF%87%CE%B1%CE%AF%CE%B1_%CF%80%CF%8C%CE%BB%CE%B7)]

[36] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Corsica]

[37] [https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%9A%CE%BF%CF%81%CF%83%CE%B9%CE%BA%CE%AE]

[38] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_Coru%C3%B1a]

[39] [[https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%9A%CE%BF%CF%81%CF%8E%CE%BD%CE%B7_(%CE%B1%CF%81%CF%87%CE%B1%CE%AF%CE%B1_%CF%80%CF%8C%CE%BB%CE%B7)]]

In the same category we can include place names such as *Karnos* in Syria (port, today's *Karnoun*), *Karna/Karnana* in Yemen (probably today's *Qarnawu*), *Karna* in Poland, *Kärna* in Sweden, *Karnal* in India, *Karnak* in Egypt. In Arabic, the word *karnak* means "fortified village", or "fortress".[40]

Also, considering the variation *sar-*, instead of *kar-*, we have *Sarnos* in Italy (the river Sarno), *Sarnios* (a river that has been identified with Hari/Tejen in Turkmenistan[41]), *Alisarna* in ancient Mysia (also an ancient town in Kos island), and so on.

A common feature of the above toponyms is that they have roots of the form *kur-*/*kor-*/*ker-*/*kar-*, where the initial *k* can be replaced with *s*, with the meaning (for the names we examined) of "spring" or "water", "cape" or "promontory", "link" or "union", "horn" or "peak", "outpost" or "fortress", and so on.

The meanings of these roots have obviously changed over time, but the distribution of the respective toponyms shows that we have a linguistic continuum, a *lingua franca*, of names with the same root or theme, which are spread from the Western Mediterranean to Western Asia. In this case, the distribution is so wide that one cannot support the case of replacement (i.e. that Semitic peoples colonized India and Pakistan, or that Indo-Europeans conquered Egypt or Iraq, in the distant past).

We will see below that toponyms with roots *(k)al-*/*(s)al-*, similar to the roots *(k)ar-*/*(s)ar-* that appear above, have etymologies that can be traced back to an early Paleo-European/Paleo-Anatolian substratum of languages.

40

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karnak#:~:text=The%20original%20name%20of%20the,which%20means%20%22fortified%20village%22.]

41

[https://pleiades.stoa.org/places/29746#:~:text=The%20Sarnios%20corresponds%20to%20the%20lower%20course,Turkmenistan%2C%20from%20around%20its%20junction%20with%20the]

Indicatively, I can mention the name of the *Galapagos* Islands, which is considered to come from the Paleo-Iberian word **calappacu* (= "sea turtle"). We will come back to this theme below. From the same theme *ka(l)las/salas*, many place names have emerged (e.g. *Kallipolis*, *Kalabryta*, *Calabria*, etc.), as well as many common words of the Greek language, such as *als* (sea), *alas* (salt), *salos* (uproar, stir), *selas* (light, shine), *kallos* (beauty), and so on.

I believe that the IE languages (which I personally call simply "languages of the Steppe peoples"), as they are attested in later times, evolved to a considerable extent from a deeper substratum of languages, as implied by similar themes. The fact that many of these roots or themes, as we shall see, have etymology in the PIE vocabulary, shows that they must have pre-existed in the IE languages (i.e. the languages of the peoples of the Steppes), before these peoples began their migrations, even if their first movements took place as early as the 4th millennium BC.

Below, I present a table with some indicative toponyms bearing the root *kur-* (according to *Qurna*), and the variants *kor-*/*ker-*/*kar-* (or *kyl-* in the case of *Kyllene*), along with their etymologies:

Toponym	Country	Etymology
Qurnah	Iraq	*qarn*: thorn, angle, joint
Qurna	Egypt	cape, promontory, top
Karnak	Egypt	fort, fortress
Kyrene	Libya	from the spring *Kyra*
Keryneia	Cyprus	from the river *Kerynites*
Kyrnos	Corsica	*kors-*: top, head
A Coruña	Spain	*caronium*: horn
Kyllene	Greece	mountain
Kärna	Sweden	*kernô*: central point.[42]

[42] [https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/k%C3%A4rna]

Karna	Poland	*kara*: related to prison (punishment).[43]
Karnal	India	*karna*: the ear (as something protruding), hypotenuse, or diagonal.[44]
Karnana	Pakistan	

The important fact that emerges from the above table is not only that these toponyms have a root or theme with the same or similar meaning with such a wide expansion, but also that the same theme is still used today in the languages of the respective regions for the formation of words. For example, in the Greek language we have *kerato* (*κέρατο*= horn), *koryphe* (*κορυφή*= top), *kara* (*κάρα*= head), and so on. Such words constitute a significant part of these languages, and they provide evidence of their primary origin.

Analysis of suffixes

According to the theory proposed by Paul Kretschmer, a number of elements of the Greek language probably have a pre-IE origin. For example, toponyms containing the consonant clusters *-nth-* or *-ns-* (*Korinthos*, *Probalinthos*, *Amarynthos*, *Zakynthos*, *Tiryns*, etc.), or the equivalent clusters *-ss-* or *-tt-* (*Larissa*, *Parnassos*, *Kephisos*, *Ilissos*, *Attice*, *Hymettos*, *Brilettos*/*Brilessos*, and so on). The same clusters also appear in words such as *asaminthos, apsinthos*, *terebinthos*, etc. Other toponyms without obvious IE etymology are *Athena*, *Messene*, *Kyllene*, *Mytilene*, *Theba*, *Delphoi*, *Lindos*, *Ramnous*, etc.[45]

However, we will see later on that, at least in many cases, there is nothing pre-Greek in these or in other suffixes, roots, or clusters. We will also see that such words and their variations are found

[43] [https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Reconstruction:Proto-Slavic/kara]

[44] [https://www.wisdomlib.org/definition/karna]

[45] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pelasgians#Herodotus]

with such frequency in the Greek vocabulary that if we consider these words "pre-Greek", then in the end we will have to admit that the Greek language has a "pre-Greek" origin.

The cluster *-nth-*

Here are some toponyms from Strabo's *Geography*, from Greece, with suffix *-nthos* (or more generally with the *-nth-* cluster):

Akrokorinthos, *Amarynthos*, *Anthedon*, *Arakynthos*, *Erymanthos*, *Kanethos*, *Korinthos*, *Kerinthos*, *Kynthos*/*Kythnos*, *Lebinthos*, *Minthe*, *Oiantheia*, *Olynthos*, *Onthyrion*, *Peparethos*, *Prepesinthos*, *Probalinthos*, *Psamathous*, *Trikorynthos*, *Zakynthos*.

Also, place names with the cluster *-nd-*/*-dn-*:

Andania, *Andros*, *Folegandros*, *Pindos*, *Poimandris*, *Aphidna*/*Aphidnai*, *Kalydnai, Kalykadnos*.

Toponyms ending in *-(i)nthos*, although considered pre-Greek, make up a broad category of European or ancient Asia Minor toponyms. For example, the Luwian-Anatolian suffix *-(a)nda* (e.g. *Alinda*, *Alabanta*, *Labranda*), as well as the European suffix *-and* (e.g. *England*, *Deutschland*, *Volgograd*, and so on). We will also see below Krahe's hydronyms from Europe bearing the same suffix *-and/-anda* (e.g. *Alanda*), in agreement with Greek place names (e.g. *Atalante*). In other words, there is no reason to assume that these toponyms, and the corresponding suffixes, are "pre-Greek", or "pre-Indo-European", whatever the last term means.

However, the most characteristic element of the cluster *-nth-*, or the corresponding suffix *-nthos*, is that it is formed secondarily, i.e. it is a byproduct, not an authentic, autonomous cluster.

To illustrate this, I will use a specific example, the toponym *Korinthos* (*Κόρινθος*= Corinth). A more correct spelling of this toponym is probably *Korynthos* (*Κόρυνθος*), considering that the name is derived from the word *korys* (*κόρυς*= crest, helmet),[46] as in the Greek word *korydallos*

[46] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%BA%CF%8C%CF%81%CF%85%CF%82]

(*κορυδαλλός* =lark), with the ancient variants *korydon*/*korydos* (*κορυδών*/*κορυδός*).[47] The type *Korynthos* is attested as a nickname of Apollo.[48] The three genders of *korys* are *korys*/ *korytha*/ *koryn* (*κόρυς*/ *κόρυθα*/ *κόρυν*), (masc./fem./neut., respectively).

We already have a first hint as to how the cluster -*nth*- can be derived from *korytha*, by the addition of a nasal *n* (i.e. **koryntha*) for easier pronunciation. The previous word can also become *koryna* (*κορύνα*= club, skittle),[49] with the omission of -*th*-. The word *koryna* is still used today with a similar meaning to refer to a piece of gymnastics equipment (specifically a club). It is also preserved as a female name (*Korina*), with the ancient Greek variant *Korinna*.

However, in order to see how the cluster -*nth*- is produced, i.e. that it is the product of the fusion of root and suffix, we must examine the word *korys*. The root of a word in general is revealed by the cases: *korys* (nom.)/ *korythos* (gen.)/ *koryn* (acc.) From the accusative case *koryn* (which is also the neutral gender of *korys* in the nominative), all the other types can be derived: *kory(n)s* (masc.)/ *kory(n)tha* (fem.)/ *koryn* (neut.). The cluster -*nth*- thus arises in a natural way from the last consonant, *n*, of the root, *koryn*, and a suffix -*thoς*, as for example in the word *enthen* (*ένθεν*= inside).

Another phenomenon about how the cluster -*nth*- is produced is what I call *duplication of the nominal case* (or simply *case duplication*), a mechanism by which the genitive case can be produced. For example, **koryns* (nom.) → **korynsos* (gen.). The types **korynsos*/ **koryntos*/ *korynthos* are equivalent. The clusters -*ns*-/-*nt*-/-*nth*-/-*nd*- (even the cluster -*ss*-/-*tt*- that we will consider below) can be produced this way.

The modern type *Korinthos* probably results from a phenomenon that I call *case regression*. That is, the genitive case *korynthos* of the earlier form **koryns* became the nominative case of the current form (*Korinthos*). This, however, does not mean language replacement.

[47] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%BA%CE%BF%CF%81%CF%85%CE%B4%CF%8E%CE%BD]

[48] [https://el.wiktionary.org/wiki/%CE%9A%CF%8C%CF%81%CF%85%CE%BD%CE%B8%CE%BF%CF%82]

[49] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%BA%CE%BF%CF%81%CF%8D%CE%BD%CE%B1]

Traditionally, the word *korys* is associated with the PIE root *kor-*/*ker-*, from where the word *kara* (*κάρα*= head)[50] comes from. This could give an initial root *kor-*, ending in *-yn* in the nominative case (i.e. *koryn*), and a genitive case **koryns*. In any case, I mention this to show that the initial root of the word is not *koryns-*/*korynth-* (to which we add a suffix *-os*), but *koryn-*, and that the cluster *-nth-* is produced by the combination of root and suffix (i.e. *koryn-thos*, not *korynth-os*).

I should also note that the above applies even if the word *korys* is a loan to the Greek language. The cluster *-nth-* can arise within the context of the Greek language, whether the word is Greek or not. In other words, it is a purely Greek cluster, which can be produced smoothly through processes of the same language.

The indigeneity of this cluster is also evident in its evolved forms. For example, all personal names in *-idas*/*ides*, or with similar suffixes, are of such origin, e.g. *Leonidas*, *Epaminondas*, *Parmenides*, *Alexandros*, etc.

Kretschmer also considered that the foreignness of the cluster *-nth-* is also seen in rare words that exist in the Greek vocabulary, such as *erebinthos*, *yakinthos*, *kerinthos*, *asaminthos*, *apsinthos*, *merinthos*, *elminthion*, *peirinthos*, *labyrinthos*, and so on. However, in some of these words the root can be etymologized in Greek. For example, the word *kerinthos* (*κήρινθος*) is related to the word *keros/kerion* (*κηρός*/*κηρίον*= wax), with PIE root *ka:r-*.[51] So the root of the word is *ker-* and the suffix is *-inthos*. (It is more correct to say that the root is *kerin-*, with an *-s* suffix, and that the word evolved into **kerinsos*/*kerinthos*.) There is also a toponym *Kerinthos* in Euboea. But the suffix cannot be pre-Greek while the root is Greek.

In reality, however, the Greek language has over 1000 words containing the cluster *-nth-* (*-νθ-*).[52] It also has over 1500 words which contain the cluster *-nd-* (*-νδ-*).[53] For example, *anthos/ athos*

[50] [https://el.wiktionary.org/wiki/%CE%BA%CF%8C%CF%81%CF%85%CF%82]

[51] [https://el.wiktionary.org/wiki/%CE%BA%CE%B5%CF%81%CE%AF]

[52] [https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/resolveform?type=substring&lookup=nq&lang=greek]

[53] [https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/resolveform?type=substring&lookup=nd&lang=greek]

(*ἄνθος/αθός*, PIE root *h₂endʰos*[54]), *andras/ anthropos* (*ἄνδρας/ ἄνθρωπος*, Proto-Greek *ἀνήρ*, PIE *h₂nḗr*[55]), *andano/ edomai* (*ανδάνω/ ήδομαι*), *indalma/ eidolon* (*ίνδαλμα/ είδωλον*), also *manthano/ mathesis* (*μανθάνω/ μάθησις*), *lanthano/ lathos* (*λανθάνω/ λάθος*), *plinthos/ lithos* (*πλίνθος/ λίθος*), *spinther> spitha* (*σπινθήρ> σπίθα*), even the pair *spendo/ spevdo* (*σπένδω/ σπεύδω*), etc.

In many cases the cluster is hidden. For example, by omitting the *n* from the cluster *-nth-*, we get *akanthos> agathi* (*άκανθος> αγκάθι*= horn), or *plinthos* (*πλίνθος*= brick) and *platho* (*πλάθω*= to mold). By adding a vowel to *anthos* (*άνθος*= flower) we get *anethos* (*άνηθος*= dill). By transposing the consonants of the *-nth-* cluster we get the words *entha* (*ένθα*= inside)/ *ethnos* (*έθνος*= nation). By omitting the *n* and changing the vowel, we get *benthos> bathos* (*βένθος> βάθος*= depth), *penthos* (*πένθος*= mourning)*/ pathos* (*πάθος*= passion). By eliminating the entire cluster *-nth-* we have *kerinthos> keros* (*κήρινθος> κηρός*= wax). If we include all these cases, then the number of words that can be produced increases dramatically.

A similar case concerns the cluster *-nd-*. We have previously seen in the analysis of the word *korys* analogous forms such as *korydon/ korydos/ korydallos/ koryna*, with possible variations **koryndos/ *korydnos/ *korydanos*. The last three words are not attested, but they are just as likely as the previous ones. All these words are formed in ways similar to those we saw in the previous paragraph- by the transposition of *n* and *d*, by the omission of *n* or *d* from the complex *-nd-*, by the addition of a vowel between the two consonants of the cluster, or even by the omission of the whole cluster, as in the word *pelidnos/ pelios* (*πελιδνός/ πελιός*= livid).[56]

Such symmetries of the *-nth-/-thn-* clusters (e.g. *entha*/*ethnos*) and *-nd-/-dn-* (e.g. **Makendos*/ *Makednos> Makedon*= Macedonian) in my opinion show a kinship of linguistic types, i.e. symmetry within dialects of the same language, or differentiations in the context of related languages (such as *Kalydnai* in Greece, *Kalynda* in Asia Minor).

[54] [https://el.wiktionary.org/wiki/%CE%AC%CE%BD%CE%B8%CE%BF%CF%82]

[55] [https://el.wiktionary.org/wiki/%E1%BC%80%CE%BD%CE%AE%CF%81]

[56] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CF%80%CE%B5%CE%BB%CE%B9%CE%B4%CE%BD%CF%8C%CF%82]

Besides, the word *enthen* (*ἔνθεν*, from the preposition *ἐν-* and the suffix of the ablative case *-θεν*) is just as Greek as the word *skhedon* (*σχεδόν*, from the verb *ἔχω* and the adverbial suffix *-δόν*),[57] or even, in my opinion, as the words *echidna*/ **ochidna*> *ochia* (*έχιδνα*/**όχιδνα*> *οχιά*= viper), **echidnos*/ *echinos* (**εχίδνος*/ *εχίνος*= hedgehog), **achidnos*> *achinos* (**αχιδνός*> *αχινός*= (sea urchin). The last three words are derived from the word *enchos* (*ἔγχος*= spear, PIE root *h₁neǵh-*),[58] or *akis* (*ἀκίς*= spike, PIE root *h₂eḱ-*).[59] We may certainly observe that the modern Greek words *ochia* and *achinos* derive from the earlier Pelasgian forms *echidna*/ **ochidna*/ **echidnos*/ **achidnos*, etc.

As we saw above for words with the cluster *-nth-*, which are derived from roots ending in *n* and suffixes *-sos*/*-tos*/*-thos* (e.g. *en-then*, *koryn-thos*), so here too the words with the cluster *-dn-* are derived from roots ending in *d*, and suffixes *-nos* (e.g. *Maked-nos, achid-nos*, etc..). Both clusters *-nth-* and *-nd-*, and their symmetrical pairs *-thn-* and *-dn-*, are produced in a natural way within the framework of the Greek language. The suffixes *-nos/-na* will be discussed later on.

Words ending in *-inthos*

Finally, I present a list of words in *-inthos*,[60] and their possible etymologies, in order to see that we can etymologize many of these words in the Greek language, (the list does not include place names):

asaminthos (*ἀσάμινθος*)

[57] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CF%83%CF%87%CE%B5%CE%B4%CF%8C%CE%BD]

[58] [https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/%E1%BC%94%CE%B3%CF%87%CE%BF%CF%82#:~:text=Etymology,but%20possibly%20from%20Pre%2DGreek.]

[59] [https://el.wiktionary.org/wiki/%E1%BC%80%CE%BA%CE%AF%CF%82]

[60] [https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/resolveform?type=end&lookup=inqos&lang=greek]

The word has been associated with the Sumerian-Babylonian *asam* "pot of clay for water",[61] or the Akkadian *namasittu* (bathtub).[62] The word is found in Homer, and is not used in the Attic dialect, where it has been replaced by words such as louterion (λουτήριον), or maktra (μάκτρα).

According to the *Suida* dictionary: the bowl, the trough; in which the ancients bathed; for *ἄσην μινύθειν*.[63] In other words, the *asaminthos* (*ἀσάμινθος*) was a vessel used to reduce (*μινύθειν*) fatigue (*ἄσην*).

Although the word may be a loan for a specific type of bathtub used in the wider region of the Eastern Mediterranean and the Near East, I find no reason to consider the suffix -*inthos* found in the word non-Greek. Let us also pay attention to the suffix -*ittu* in the Akkadian word *namasittu*, and remember the suffix -*anda* in toponyms from Asia Minor, or the suffix -*and* in toponyms from Europe, in order to realize the existence and large extent of a linguistic continuum, in the context of which "international" words were shared.

There was also *Saminthos*, a town in Argolis.[64]

apsinthos/apsynthos (*ἄψινθος/ἄψυνθος*)

The wormwood plant. A characteristic of the plant is its aroma and bitter taste, as it is useful in pharmaceuticals, and especially in the distillation of absinthe as a drink.[65]

---

61 [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%E1%BC%80%CF%83%CE%AC%CE%BC%CE%B9%CE%BD%CE%B8%CE%BF%CF%82]

62 [https://el.wiktionary.org/wiki/%E1%BC%80%CF%83%CE%AC%CE%BC%CE%B9%CE%BD%CE%B8%CE%BF%CF%82]

63 [https://www.physics.ntua.gr/mourmouras/ilias_odysseia/Lexiko/souida.html]

64 [https://topostext.org/place/377227USam#:~:text=Saminthos%20(Argolid)%202%20Borsa?,ravage%20Saminthus%20and%20other%20places.]

65 [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%E1%BC%84%CF%88%CE%B9%CE%BD%CE%B8%CE%BF%CF%82]

The form *apsys* (*ἀψύς*= one that has a strong flavor, or is sour) is subsequent, and was derived according to the form *oxys* (*ὀξύς*= acute), e.g. *oxythymos* (*ὀξύθυμος*= short-tempered).[66] The prefix *ἀψί-* in the ancient Greek language has the meaning of "quickly", e.g. *apsikoros* (*ἀψίκορος*= one who gets full quickly),[67] *apsimachos* (*ἀψίμαχος*= adventurous, ready for battle),[68] etc.

Apsinthos was also a town of ancient Thrace.[69]

The name *apsinthos* can therefore describe in the Greek language the property of the plant, its *acute* (*ἀψί-*) taste.

bolinthos (*βόλινθος*)

Also *bonasos* (*βόνασος*= bison). The unattested form **boninthos* is suggested too. The word refers to the more common type *bous* (*βοῦς*= ox). It is considered, however, to be of unknown or pre-Greek etymology.[70]

As far as the word *bous* is concerned, it is reduced to the IE root *gweh₃-u-* (e.g. Sanskrit *gaúḥ*, Latin *bōs*, etc.).[71]

The form *bolitos* (*βόλιτος*), or *bolbithos* (*βόλβιθος*),[72] with the same meaning, is also cited, which explains the presence of *l* (*λ*) in the word *bolinthos*.

The connection of the previous forms with the word *bous* seems to me obvious, whether the last word is a simplification or an evolution of the other, more extensive, types, and despite the difficulties of transformations between the types. For example, the word *volvo* just came to my

[66] [https://el.wiktionary.org/wiki/%CE%B1%CF%88%CF%8D%CF%82]

[67] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%E1%BC%81%CF%88%CE%AF%CE%BA%CE%BF%CF%81%CE%BF%CF%82]

[68] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%E1%BC%81%CF%88%CE%AF%CE%BC%CE%B1%CF%87%CE%BF%CF%82]

[69] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%E1%BC%8C%CF%88%CF%85%CE%BD%CE%B8%CE%BF%CF%82]

[70] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%B2%CF%8C%CE%BB%CE%B9%CE%BD%CE%B8%CE%BF%CF%82]

[71] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%B2%CE%BF%E1%BF%A6%CF%82]

[72] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%B2%CF%8C%CE%BB%CE%B9%CF%84%CE%BF%CF%82]

mind, which is related to the Latin verb *volvere* (to run).[73] The Greek verb *ballo* (*βάλλω*= to throw, to move forward),[74] has the same meaning. Thus *bolinthos*/*bolbithos* means "the one who runs".

elmins/elminthos (*ἔλμινς/ἔλμινθος*)

A species of worm that lives parasitically in the intestinal tract of humans and animals. Other names include *ermingas* (*έρμιγγας*), *ormingas* (*όρμιγγας*), *lebida* (*λεβίδα*) and *lebithos* (*λέβιθος*).[75]

The form *elmins* is associated with the verb *eilo* (*εἴλω*) (and its variations *εἰλέω*, *εἰλέω*, *εἴλλω*, *εἴλλω*, *ἴλλω*), which has the meaning of "to contract, to wrinkle (for human or animal), to enclose, to press, to wrap, to circumscribe, to squeeze, to crush".[76]

The word is also related to the Latin *vermis*, or the English *vermin* and *worm*, words that go back to the IE root *wel-* "to press, twist, enclose", from where the word *elix* (*ἕλιξ*= helix) comes from.[77] The words *skolex* (*σκώληξ*= worm) and *skelos* (*σκέλος*= part, leg) have a similar etymology.

In the modern Greek language, the word that is directly related and has survived is the disease *helminthiasis*. However, words such as *elmins*, **koryns* (seen above), or *peirins* (*πείρινς*, which we will see below), are of fundamental importance for understanding the birth and evolution of the Greek language. If we do not understand how the types *elmin-s* (nominative)/ *elmin-thos* (genitive) are formed, (i.e., by fusing the last consonant *n* of the root with the suffix *-s*), we will continue to believe that the suffix *-inthos* is "pre-Greek".

erebinthos/lebinthos (*ἐρέβινθος/λέβινθος*)

[73] [https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/volvo#Latin]

[74] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%B2%CE%AC%CE%BB%CE%BB%CF%89]

[75] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%E1%BC%95%CE%BB%CE%BC%CE%B9%CE%BD%CF%82]

[76] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%B5%E1%BC%B4%CE%BB%CF%89]

[77] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%B5%E1%BC%B4%CE%BB%CF%89]

Commonly, chickpea. Also *orobos* (*ὄροβος*), from the verb *erepto*/*erepho* (*ἐρέπτω*/*ἐρέφω*= to cut, to pluck). The word goes back to the IE root *rebh*-, with the meaning "cover from above", hence the German *hirnireba* "skull", or the Greek *orophos* (*ὄροφος*= floor).[78]

Characteristic of the word is the initial prefix *Le*, which is attested in the alternative name *lebinthos* (*λέβινθος*), with the augmentations *e-le*/*e-re* (*ε-λε-*/*ε-ρε-*) in the form *erebinthos* (*ἐρέβινθος*). Of similar morphology are words such as *lebes* (*λέβης*= cauldron), *lobos* (*λοβός*= the hollow part of the ear), *lepos* (*λέπος*= bark, shell), *lekythos* (*λέκυθος*= the inside of the egg or of legumes), etc. Also, the name of the island *Lebitha* (*Λέβιθα*) betrays its shape (round like *lebinthos* "chickpea").

I consider such words, which contain syllables-prefixes of the form *Le*, *La* (as in *labyrinth* that we will see below), *Pa*, *Ga*, and so on, to be primary, and that they go back to an initial stage of the Greek language. From this stage the roots of the words would have evolved, with a combination of these primary syllables. For example, *Pa* + *Ga* = *paga*> *pege* (*Πα* + *Γα* = *παγά*> *πηγή* "spring, source", thus the toponym *Pagasai* (*Παγάσαι*), etc.

In many cases this way of etymology brings us closer to the meaning of words that contain these prefixes. For example, if we consider that the word *lebinthos* derives from the thematic syllable *Le* and the word **binthos*> *bythos* (**βινθός*> *βυθός*= seabed), or *benthos*> *bathos* (*βένθος*> *βάθος*= depth), we find exactly the meaning that the word describes.

In any case, the word *erebinthos*/ *lebinthos* has survived in the Greek language as *rebithi* (*ρεβίθι*), with the same meaning.

kalaminthos (*καλάμινθος*)

A type of aromatic plant. According to one view, the word derives from the types *kalamos* (*κάλαμος*= reed) and *minthe* (*μίνθη*= mint).[79] In this case the word should be **kalamominthe* (**καλαμομίνθη*), a form that is not attested.

[78] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%B5%CF%81%CE%AD%CF%86%CF%89]

[79] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%BA%CE%B1%CE%BB%CE%B1%CE%BC%CE%AF%CE%BD%CE%B8%CE%B7]

A more likely interpretation for me is that the word contains the theme *ka(l)las*, which we will talk about later on, and which has the meaning of "sea", or "water" in general. The same theme is found in the word *kalamos* (reed).

In other words, *kalaminthos* may derive from *ka(l)las* (water) and *minthe* (mint). However, there is a possibility that the word originally simply meant *kalamos* (reed), with an earlier form **kalamins*/ **kalamintha*/ *kalamin* (**καλάμινς*/ **καλάμινθα*/ *καλάμιν*) for the three genders (masc./fem./neut., respectively). The latter type *kalamin* is attested in Byzantine Greek,[80] while *kalami* (*καλάμι*) is the modern Greek word.

kerinthos (*κήρινθος*)

The word *kerinthos* is related to the word *keros/kerin* (*κηρός*/*κερίν*= wax), and refers to a possible earlier form **kerins* (nom.)/ *kerinthos* (gen.), (**κήρινς*/*κήρινθος*). Over time, the word acquired different meanings. For example, *kerinthos*: "the food of bees, erithace (εριθάκη), a liquid gummy substance, different from honey, which is produced by bees as their food".[81]

The type *keros* refers to the deeper root *ker*-, from which the form *kerin* (root *ker*- + suffix -*in*) came from. From the same type came the ancient Greek word *ker* (*κῆρ*= heart). In the modern Greek language we use the word *kerethra* (*κηρήθρα*= honeycomb), which thus represents the "heart" of the beehive.

I also believe that the word *kerinthos* (with the root *kerin* + suffix -*thos*) is an evolution of the original form (**kerins*), while the modern Greek word *keri* (*κερί*= wax) has returned to the original form (*kerin*> *keri*).

There is also the town of *Kerinthos* in Euboea.

[80] [https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/%CE%BA%CE%B1%CE%BB%CE%AC%CE%BC%CE%B9]

[81] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%BA%CE%AE%CF%81%CE%B9%CE%BD%CE%B8%CE%BF%CF%82]

korynthos (*κόρυνθος*)

The word is quoted by Hesychius with the meaning of "dough".[82] The word is also attested as a nickname of Apollo of Asine. The form *korys*/*korythos* (*κόρυς*/*κόρυθος*), which we have already seen in relation to the toponym *Korinthos* (Corinth), has the meaning of something that protrudes, the crest, from which the word *korydallos* (lark, "crested bird") comes from, hence the name *koryntheus* (*κορυνθεύς*= rooster).[83]

So perhaps the type *korynthos* with the meaning of "dough" refers to the ability of something to swell.

labyrinthos (*λαβύρινθος*)

The popular etymology is related to the palace of Knossos (the *labyrinth*), and refers to anything that looks like a maze. It is believed that the word is associated with the *labrys* (*λάβρυς*, "double axe"), or perhaps with *lavra* (*λαύρα*, "cobbled road").[84]

These etymologies may be valid to some extent, because they bear the common root *lab*-/*lav*-, but I believe that the etymology is quite different. To illustrate this, I considered a syllabic prefix *La*, which is found at the beginning of the word, and then searched for ancient Greek words with the root *byr*-. So I discovered the words *byrion* (*βύριον*= house), and *byriothen* (*βυριόθεν*= "from the house"). More specifically, according to the entry of the *LSJ* dictionary, "*Eubyrion* is said [to mean] well-housed, because according to the Messapians, *bauria* means house".[85]

Although the word *byrion* has not survived in the Greek language, it could be associated with the verb *phyo* (*φύω*= to grow). It is possible, however, that it is a word which, along with the words *labrys* and *labyrinthos*, refers to a Pelasgian dialect related to, but not identical to, the Greek

[82] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%BA%CF%8C%CF%81%CF%85%CE%BD%CE%B8%CE%BF%CF%82]

[83] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%BA%CE%BF%CF%81%CF%85%CE%BD%CE%B8%CE%B5%CF%8D%CF%82]

[84] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%BB%CE%B1%CE%B2%CF%8D%CF%81%CE%B9%CE%BD%CE%B8%CE%BF%CF%82]

[85] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%B2%CF%8D%CF%81%CE%B9%CE%BF%CE%BD]

language (*labrys*, for example, has been associated with ancient Lydia, while the word *labyrinthos* can be a direct loan from the Minoan language).

As far as the thematic syllable *La* is concerned, it can be related to *laas* (*λᾶας*= stone), or it can be a type of article (like the French *La*/*Le*).

Therefore, the word *labyrinthos* (*La* + **byrins*) means "the stone house", or, simply, "the house".

merinthos/smerinthos (*μήρινθος/σμήρινθος*)

The word means "string, twine, rope, fishing line", and is associated with the IE root *mer*- "to connect, knit, tape, loop".[86] Hence the verb *meryo*/*meryomai* (*μηρύω*/*μηρύομαι*), "to contract, to wrap, to gather, to pull out, to weave".[87] For example, from Homer's *Odyssey*: "ἀνστάντες δ᾽ ἕταροι νεὸς ἱστία *μηρύσαντο*" (As the comrades stood up, they *rolled up* the ship's sails).

Also cognates are *merinx*/ *smerinx* (*μῆριγξ*/ *σμῆριγξ*= "bristle",[88] and *mermis*/ *mermitha* (*μέρμις*/ *μέρμιθα*), "string, twine, rope".[89]

According to Hesychius, *smeringes* (*σμήριγγες*): "πλεκταί, σειραί˙ βόστρυχοι˙ καὶ τῶν κυνῶν ἐν τοῖς μηροῖς καὶ τοῖς αὐχέσιν ὀρθαὶ τρίχες" (braids, rows; curls; and the hairs of dogs standing upright on their thighs and necks).[90] He also says about the word *meros* (*μηρός*= thigh): "καὶ τὸ τῆς καλάμης κῶλον" (and the stalk of the reed), as well as about the word *meryomene* (*μηρυομένη*): "ἐκτεινομένη" (extended).[91]

[86] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%BC%CE%AE%CF%81%CE%B9%CE%BD%CE%B8%CE%BF%CF%82]

[87] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%BC%CE%B7%CF%81%CF%8D%CE%BF%CE%BC%CE%B1%CE%B9]

[88] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%BC%E1%BF%86%CF%81%CE%B9%CE%B3%CE%BE]

[89] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%BC%CE%AD%CF%81%CE%BC%CE%B9%CF%82]

[90] [https://el.wikisource.org/wiki/%CE%93%CE%BB%CF%8E%CF%83%CF%83%CE%B1%CE%B9/%CE%A3]

[91] [https://el.wikisource.org/wiki/%CE%93%CE%BB%CF%8E%CF%83%CF%83%CE%B1%CE%B9/%CE%9C]

In this sense, quoted by Hesychius, the words *merins* (*μήρινς*) and *merinx* (*μῆριγξ*) can be connected with the word *meros* (*μηρός*), with a root *mer-*, with the meaning of "what is standing, what is extended".

mintha (*μίνθα*)

The common plant mint. Also *minthion*, *mintharion*, *minthin* (*μινθίον*, *μινθάριον*, *μινθίν*). The word *mintha* is considered a loanword from a language of the pre-Greek substratum.[92] The word is also attested in the Mycenaean script, as *mi-ta* (*mintha*).

Dioscorides, *On Medical Material*, says: "ἡδύοσμον ἥμερον· οἱ δὲ μίνθα, οἱ δὲ καλαμίνθη, Ῥωμαῖοι μέντα, οἱ δὲ νεπέταμ, Αἰγύπτιοι τίς, οἱ δὲ φερθρουμόνθου, οἱ δὲ περξώ, οἱ δὲ μακιθώ" (cultivated spearmint; some call it mintha, some calaminthe, the Romans call it menta, some of the Egyptians call it nepeta, other Egyptians call it pherthroumonthou, others perxo, others makitho).[93]

The Egyptian form -*monthou* (which appears in the word *pherthroumonthou*) is very reminiscent of the Greek form *mintha*, but the original form in the Semitic languages seems to have been different, for example *na'na'* in Arabic, *nia-nia* in ancient Egyptian (mentioned in the Ebers Papyrus, probably with the same meaning), or *ananihu* in Akkadian.[94]

The paradox with the name *mintha* (*menta* in modern Greek) is that it is associated with words such as *minthos* (*μίνθος*) or *minthoo* (*μινθόω*) which are related to "manure" or "stench".[95] This may be because aromatic plants thrive in areas where there is fertilization from animal manure. In other words, the ancients may have thought that mint was produced from animal manure. Also, the verb *minthoo* may have originally had a neutral meaning.

[92] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%BC%CE%AF%CE%BD%CE%B8%CE%B7]

[93] [http://www.poesialatina.it/_ns/greek/testi/Dioscorides/De_materia_medica_(recensiones_e_codd._Vindob.). html]

[94] [https://www.ebl.badw.de/dictionary/ananihu%20I]

[95] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%BC%CE%B9%CE%BD%CE%B8%CF%8C%CF%89]

Of similar importance are words such as *miansis* (*μίανσις*) or *miaino* (*μιαίνω*), in the sense of "to litter, to pollute",[96] words that contain the diminutive prefix *Mi*, or *Mei*, or even words such as *miaros* (*μιαρός*= dirty), *meion* (*μείων*= less) *mikros* (*μικρός*= small), and so on. In this sense, *mintha* can simply mean "*Μι + ανθός*" (*Mi- anthos*), (where *anthos*= flower), or *anthos meion* (*ἄνθος μεῖον*), i.e. "small flower", "lesser plant ".

peirinthos (*πείρινθος*)

According to the *LSJ* dictionary, *peirinthos* was a large knitted basket, square or circular, woven from willow branches or ropes or from reeds, which was tied to a carriage or chariot, and served as a seat or for placing food, otherwise known as *plinthion* (*πλινθίον*): "ἅμαξαν... ὁπλίσαι ἠνώγει, *πείρινθα* δὲ δῆσαι ἐπ' αὐτῆς" (He ordered to prepare the wagon, and to bind the *wicker basket* upon it), Homer's *Iliad*. The word *peirinthos* is considered a Pelasgian loan. The connection of the word with toponyms such as *Peirene* (*Πειρήνη*) and *Peiraieus* (*Πειραιεύς*, modern Piraeus) is also considered unlikely.[97]

However, the word is associated with the verb *peiraino* (*πειραίνω*, "to tie from the edges").[98] The word *peiros* (*πείρος*) has been preserved in the modern Greek language, which comes from the ancient Greek verb *peiro* (*πείρω*), "to pierce something from one end to the other, to penetrate".[99] The latter verb is reduced to the IE root *per*- "to penetrate, to transport, to pass through", hence the words *pera* (*πέρα*= far)*, poros* (*πόρος*= pore)*, porpe* (*πόρπη*= clasp), *perone* (*περόνη*= pin), *peras* (*πέρας*= end), *peirasmos* (*πειρασμός*= trial), *diamperes* (*διαμπερές*= permeable), *peira> empeiria* (*πεῖρα> εμπειρία*= experience), and so on.[100] Hence the verbs *peirao*/*peiro* (*πειράω*/*πειρῶ*= to test, to try),[101] and *perao* (*περάω*= to pass, to reach the end).[102]

[96] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%BC%CE%B9%CE%B1%CE%AF%CE%BD%CF%89]

[97] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CF%80%CE%B5%CE%AF%CF%81%CE%B9%CE%BD%CF%82]

[98] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CF%80%CE%B5%CE%B9%CF%81%CE%B1%CE%AF%CE%BD%CF%89]

[99] [https://el.wiktionary.org/wiki/%CF%80%CE%B5%CE%AF%CF%81%CE%BF%CF%82]

[100] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CF%80%CE%B5%CE%AF%CF%81%CF%89]

[101] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CF%80%CE%B5%CE%B9%CF%81%CE%AC%CF%89]

[102] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CF%80%CE%B5%CF%81%CE%AC%CF%89]

Therefore, the word *peirinthos* is as Greek as all the previous words, as well as the corresponding toponyms, *Perinthos* (*Πέρινθος*), *Perama* (*Πέραμα*), *Peirene* (*Πειρήνη*), *Perate* (*Περατή*), and *Peiraieus* (*Πειραιεύς*).

plinthos (*πλίνθος*)

The word *plinthos* (brick) is found in the modern Greek language as *plithos* (*πλίθος*), by omitting the *n* from the *-nth-* cluster. In the verb *plasso (πλάσσω*= to give shape, to mold), however, the *n* of the root is fused with the *s* of the suffix, giving the cluster *-ss-* (**plan-so> plasso*). Paradoxically, however, the word has been characterized as a loan, or pre-Greek: "A technical term, of uncertain etymology, which is either a loan or belongs to a pre-Greek linguistic substrate, like the word keramos".[103] The word *keramos* (*κέραμος*= tile), however, is related to *keras* (*κέρας*= horn), which is something that protrudes.

The word *plinthos* is also associated with the words *lithos* (*λίθος*= stone), *plethos* (*πλῆθος*= multitude, plethora), *platho* (*πλάθω*, same as *πλάσσω*), even *platys* (*πλατύς*= wide). *Palinthos*, as we will see later on, was called the tomb of Danaus. This word contains the characteristic cluster *-nth-*. For this particular cluster, we have already said that it is secondary, i.e. that it arises from roots ending in *-n* (*-ν*) and the suffix *-s*/*-sos* (*-ς*/*-σος*), therefore it is not pre-Greek. In fact, the word *palinthos* can be considered as a variant of the word *plinthos*.

As far as the modern Greek word *toublo* (*τούβλο*= brick) is concerned, it comes from the Latin *tubus* (tube), through the Byzantine *tubulon* (*τούβουλον*).[104] In other words, *plinthos* is the original Greek word.

sminthos (*σμίνθος*)

The word *sminthos* (mouse) is thought to have come from the region of Asia Minor, probably from Mysia.[105] This connection is due to the nickname *Smintheus* of Apollo, who was worshipped in

[103] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CF%80%CE%BB%CE%AF%CE%BD%CE%B8%CE%BF%CF%82]

[104] [https://el.wiktionary.org/wiki/%CF%84%CE%BF%CF%8D%CE%B2%CE%BB%CE%BF]

[105] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CF%83%CE%BC%CE%AF%CE%BD%CE%B8%CE%BF%CF%82]

Asia Minor, with this nickname. There was also, according to ancient writers, the city of *Sminthe* in Troas.[106]

A city *Sminthe* also exists in Xanthi.[107]

As far as the etymology of the word *sminthos* is concerned, it may be related to the word *minthos*, which we saw above with respect to *mintha* (mint), with the meaning of "manure", "dirt". If such an etymology is oxymoronic for the mint, it is characteristically suitable for the mouse. There is also the word *sminydion/smynie* (*σμινύδιον*/*σμυνίη*, "forked tool for digging"),[108] which is associated with the verb *smilevo* (*σμιλεύω*= to sculpt), in which case *sminthos* (the mouse), with its two characteristic protruding teeth, means "sculptor", in the same sense that today the mouse is called "rodent". Finally, *sminthos* may simply mean *smikros* (*σμικρός*= small), due to its small size.

The modern Greek word *pontikos* (*ποντικός*, "mouse") came from the expression "pontikos mys" (*ποντικός μυς*= mouse of the sea), in contrast to "arouraios mys" (*αρουραίος μυς*= mouse of the field).[109]

In any case, the word *mys* (*μῦς*= mouse) derives from the word *sminthos*, as (**smins*> **mins*> *μῦς*).

terminthos/terebinthos (*τέρμινθος/τερέβινθος*)

Terebinthos or *terminthos* is the name of the wild pistachio tree, which was used before the introduction of the domesticated variety. The word is also found with the alternative forms *tereminthos* (*τερέμινθος*), *tremithos* (*τρέμιθος*), *tetterebinthos* (*τεττερέβινθος*), *terbinthos* (*τέρβινθος*). The origin of the word is from the wider region of the Mediterranean and Anatolia, where the plant can be found. The name *terebinthos* is considered subsequent, probably in

[106] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%A3%CE%BC%CE%B9%CE%BD%CE%B8%CE%B5%CF%8D%CF%82]

[107] [https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%A3%CE%BC%CE%AF%CE%BD%CE%B8%CE%B7_%CE%9E%CE%AC%CE%BD%CE%B8%CE%B7%CF%82]

[108] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CF%83%CE%BC%CE%B9%CE%BD%CF%8D%CE%B7]

[109] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CF%80%CE%BF%CE%BD%CF%84%CE%B9%CE%BA%CF%8C%CF%82]

proportion to *erebinthos* (chickpea), which we previously saw, possibly because of the shape of the fruits.[110]

The word also appears in Mycenaean inscriptions as *ti-mi-to* (*tirminthos*).

As far as the etymology of the word *terminthos/ terebinthos* is concerned, it can be connected, through the Latin word *termes* (tree branch), with the IE root *ter-*, with the meaning "tender, gentle, weak, young, small",[111] from which the ancient Greek words *tery* (*τέρυ*= weak, thin), *teren* (*τέρην*= gentle, tender), or *teramon* (*τεράμων*= the one who softens by boiling) derive.[112]

As far as the modern Greek word *phistiki* (*φιστίκι*= pistachio) is concerned, the word is probably of Iranian origin (from an unattested type **pistaka*[113]), and seems to have been introduced to Greece during the Hellenistic era, when the word is first attested.

yacinthos (*ὑάκινθος*)

In general, the word *yacinthos* (hyacinth) refers to various plants with a dark blue color. The authentic native plant with the same name that is attested by Homer has been identified by some with the species *Scilla bifolia*.[114] In Greek mythology, *Yacinthos* was a hero and student of Apollo.[115]

---

110 [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CF%84%CE%B5%CF%81%CE%AD%CE%B2%CE%B9%CE%BD%CE%B8%CE%BF%CF%82]

111 [https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/termes#Latin]

112 [https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Reconstruction:Proto-Indo-European/ter-]

113 [https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/%D9%BE%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%87#Persian]

114 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hyacinth]

115 [https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%A5%CE%AC%CE%BA%CE%B9%CE%BD%CE%B8%CE%BF%CF%82_(%CE%BC%CF%85%CE%B8%CE%BF%CE%BB%CE%BF%CE%B3%CE%AF%CE%B1)]

Although the word has been considered pre-Greek, it can be directly etymologized in the Greek language from the verb *yo*/*yakizo* (*ΐ̈ω*/*ὑακίζω*= to make something wet),[116] hence the word *yetos* (*ὑετός*= rain).

The cluster -*ss*-/-*tt*-

In what we mentioned above about the cluster -*nth*-, we have already alluded to how the cluster -*ss*- or -*tt*- can be produced. For example, from the form **koryns*, by duplicating the -*s* suffix of the nominal case, we get the equivalent types **korynsos*/ **koryntos*/ **koryssos*/ **koryttos*/ **korystos*. For example, we have the words *passelenos* (*πασσέληνος*[117]= *πάν* + *σελήνη*), *passagia* (*πασσαγία*[118] = *πάν* + *σάγη*), *abyssos* (from **abynthos*/*abythos*), *melissa* (from **melinsa*), and so on.

What I want to show is that the cluster -*ss*-/-*tt*- is produced in the same way as the cluster -*nth*-, i.e. by joining roots ending in *n* (maybe even *s*) with the suffix -*sos*/-*sa* (e.g. *melin-sa*→ *melissa*) What applies to the cluster -*ss*- is also true for the cluster -*tt*-.

However, the traditional formation of the word *melissa* (*μέλισσα*= honeybee) is different. It is assumed that the word is derived from a root *melit*-/*melis*- (*μέλιτ*-/*μέλισ*-), and a suffix -*ja*.[119] We immediately understand that this etymology falls short, because the form **melisja* does not result in the duplication of the *s*. There is no second *s* in the suffix to produce the double -*ss*-. Thus, the suffix -*ja*, which is considered of "Indo-European" origin, does not correctly convey the word formation of the Greek language.

And since we have just talked about the Greek *language* (in Greek *glossa*, *γλώσσα*), let's see how this word can be formed. According to the official definition, the word comes from the root *glokh*-

[116] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%E1%BD%91%CE%B1%CE%BA%CE%AF%CE%B6%CF%89]

[117] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CF%80%CE%B1%CF%83%CF%83%CE%AD%CE%BB%CE%B7%CE%BD%CE%BF%CF%]

[118] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CF%80%CE%B1%CF%83%CF%83%CE%B1%CE%B3%CE%AF%CE%B1]

[119] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%BC%CE%AD%CE%BB%CE%B9%CF%83%CF%83%CE%B1]

/glok- (*γλωχ-/γλωκ-*) and the suffix *-ja*.[120] We can clearly see that with this etymology we do not get a single *s* (let alone the cluster *-ss-* that the word has). On the contrary, if we consider the root *glok-* and the suffix *-s/-sa* (*-ς/σα*), we immediately take the forms *gloks* (*γλώξ*) and **gloksa*→ *glossa* (**γλώκσα*→ *γλώσσα*), with the assimilation of *k* and the duplication of *s*.

The words *glokhin/glokhis (γλωχίν/γλωχίς*, "sharp edge") are also attested,[121] from which we can take the form **glokhins* (**γλωχίνς*), according to **koryns* (**κόρυνς*), *peirins* (*πείρινς*), and *elmins* (*ἔλμινς*), which we have already mentioned. Obviously, the IE theory cannot cover the Pelasgian idiom of the Greek *language* (*glossa*).

There is another example from the Mycenaean inscriptions regarding the formation of similar words. These are the types *anax/anassa* (*άναξ/άνασσα*= king/queen). The corresponding transliteration is *wa-na-ka*/ *wa-na-sa*. Whatever the correct spelling of the words may be, their root is *wanak-* (*Fanak-*), while the suffix ix *-s* or *-sos* for the masculine gender, or *-sa* for the feminine gender, instead of *-jos/-ja* for the two genders respectively.

All of the above concern the formation of Greek words which contain the cluster *-ss-*, or have suffix *-sos*. Thus, it seems that words or place names ending in *-sos* or *-nthos* evolved from earlier names with suffixes *-s*/*-sa*/*-n* (*-ς*/*-σα*/*-ν*) for the three genders (masc./fem./neut., respectively).

As in the case of names with the cluster *-nth-* we referred to the word *enthen* (*ἔνθεν = ἐν + θεν*), so here we can consider for the formation of the cluster *-ss-* the word *ossos* (*ὅσσος*= as much as), i.e, *ossos* = *os* + *sos* (*ὅσσος*= *ὅς* + *σος*). In this particular case, the cluster *-ss-* is produced by a root ending in *s*, and a suffix *-sos*.

This way of analyzing the composition of such words helps us to explain other words, such as *dissos*/*dittos* (*δισσός*/*διττός*, "double"), *lissos* (*λισσός*, "smooth"), *issotheos* (*ἰσσόθεος*, "equal to

[120] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%B3%CE%BB%CF%8E%CF%83%CF%83%CE%B1]

[121] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%B3%CE%BB%CF%89%CF%87%CE%AF%CE%BD]

God". In the latter case, the alternative form with a double *s* (*issotheos*), instead of the regular form with one *s* (*isotheos*), may simply have to do with pronunciation.

One could claim that many toponyms are of pre-Greek origin because they have suffixes *-sos* or *-nthos* but their gender is feminine (the *-os* suffix in the modern Greek language is used mostly for the masculine gender). Such toponyms are *Alonessos*, *Mykalessos*, *Anabyssos*, *Zakynthos*, *Assos*, etc. However, this is not always the case. For example, the toponyms *Parnassos*, *Hymettos*, *Ilissos*, etc., are masculine. The same applies to place names in *-os* in general. For example, most Greek islands with this suffix are feminine (e.g. *Leros*, *Patmos*, *Kalymnos*, *Amorgos*, etc.). In fact, the same suffix can be used for both masculine and feminine names. For example, in the Greek language the word *giatros* (*γιατρός*= doctor), or *boskos* (*βοσκός*= shepherd), can be either masculine or feminine (the suffix is *-os* also for the feminine gender, although commonly for this gender the suffix *-a* is used). Therefore the argument that such names are of foreign origin is false.

Another way to consider the suffixes *-s/-sa/-n* (*-ς/-σα/-ν*) is with respect to adjectives in *-eis*/*-essa*/*-en* (*-εις/-εσσα/-εν*), for the three genders, e.g. *asteroeis*/ *asteroessa*/ *asteroen* (*αστερόεις*/ *αστερόεσσα*/ *αστερόεν*= "starry"). These suffixes recur in toponyms that Strabo cites in his *Geography*, such as *Ypsoeis*, *Gonoessa*, *Poieessa*, and so on. The word *asteroessa*, as well as the last two place names, are feminine, and contain suffixes with the cluster *-ss-*.

Another example is the suffix *-on*/*-ousa*/*-oun* (*-ων/-ουσα/-ουν*), or *-sas*/*-sasa*/*-san* (*-σας/-σασα/-σαν*, for the three genders of the present or past participle, respectively. For example, we have *poion*/ *poiousa*/ *poioun* (*ποιῶν*/ *ποιοῦσα*/ *ποιοῦν*), or *poiesas*/ *poiesasa*/ *poiesan* (*ποιήσας*/ *ποιήσασα*/ *ποιῆσαν*), where *ποιῶ*= "to make", *ποιῶν* = "he who makes", *ποιήσας*= "he who made", etc. Thus, we see the high degree of assimilation of the cluster *-ss-* in the Greek language.

Later on we will discuss the suffix *-si*, which parts of the Greek speech are also formed with.

Toponyms of Attica ending in *-ssos/-ttos*

Finally, I quote some indicative toponyms from Attica with suffixes *-(s)sos*/*-(t)tos*, so that such toponyms can be etymologized in the Greek language:

Ardettos (*Αρδηττός*)

From the verb *ardo* (*ἄρδω*= to irrigate), future tense *arso* (*ἄρσω*).[122] The etymology is considered unknown. Some have assumed that it is a "Pelasgian" loan. However, the root *ar-* is widely used in the Greek language, as it is found in many words with earth-related meanings, such as *aroura* (*άρουρα*= plot of land), *arotro* (*άροτρο*= plough), *argos*/*agros* (*άργος*/*αγρός*= field), etc.[123] The verb *aroo*/*aro* (*ἀρόω*/*ἀρῶ*= to plough), future tense *arosso* (*ἀρόσσω*), [124] has the same origin, and from the same root *ar-*/*arg-*/*agr-* the words *agra* (*άγρα*= hunting) and *agora* (*αγορά*= marketplace) derive.

Let us also pay attention to the suffixes *-so*/*-osso* (*-σω*/*-όσσω*) of the future tense of the verbs *ardo* and *aro* mentioned above. If all these roots and suffixes are of "pre-Greek" origin, then there is probably no word left that is "Greek".

Brilessos/Brilissos (*Βριλησσός/Βριλισσός*)

From the prefix *bri-* (*βρι-*), and the word *lissos* (*λισσός*).

With respect to the prefix *bri-*: "ἐπὶ τοῦ μεγάλου καὶ ἰσχυροῦ καὶ χαλεποῦ τίθεται" ("to [that which is] great and powerful and dangerous/difficult is applied").[125] Compare *briaros* (*βριαρός*= strong), *britho* (*βρίθω*= I am full), *briepyos* (*βριήπυος*= the one who shouts loudly), etc.

---

[122] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%E1%BC%84%CF%81%CE%B4%CF%89]

[123] [https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%86%CF%81%CE%B9%CE%BF#:~:text=%CE%97%20%CF%81%CE%AF%CE%B6%CE%B1%20%CE%B1%CF%81%2D%20%CE%B1%CF%80%CE%B1%CE%BD%CF%84%CE%AC%CF%84%CE%B1%CE%B9%20%CF%83%CE%B5,%2C%20%CE%AC%CF%81%CF%89%CE%BC%CE%B1%2C%20%CE%91%CF%81%CE%BA%CE%B1%CE%B4%CE%AF%CE%B1%2C%20%CE%BA.]

[124] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%E1%BC%80%CF%81%CF%8C%CF%89]

[125] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%B2%CF%81%CE%AF]

With respect to the word *lissos*= smooth, slippery: "*λισσὴ* αἰπεῖάτε εἰς ἅλα πέτρη" ("a *smooth* and steep rock, into the sea").[126]

Thus, Brilissos (ancient name of Mount Pentele) was so named because it was full of smooth, white rocks (the Pentelic marble).[127]

Gargettos (*Γαργηττός*)

From *gargairo* (*γαργαίρω*= to be full or flooded with something).[128] Hence *gargara* (*γάργαρα*= heap, multitude, abundance).[129] It is an onomatopoeic word, imitating the sound of running water, by duplicating the root *gar*- found in the word. The toponym *Gargettos* therefore derives from the "gargling" of running water. Such words, as *gargarizo* (*γαργαρίζω*= to gargle), *titibizo* (*τιτιβίζω*= to tweet), *alalazo* (*αλαλάζω*= to shout aloud), *kakarizo* (*κακαρίζω*= to cluck, to cackle), etc., come from primordial roots that mimic natural sounds. Therefore, these words in a language are difficult to replace.

Ilissos/Eilissos (*Ἰλισσός/Εἰλισσός*)

From the verb **ilisso* (**ἰλίσσω*= to cover, to bury). The attested form is the infinitive *ilissai*/*eilysai* (*ἰλίσσαι*/*εἰλῦσαι*), with the same meaning.[130] Hence *ilys* (*ἰλύς*= mud).[131]

Kephisos (*Κηφισός*)

From the verb *kefthο* (*κεύθω*= to cover),[132] where *kefthos* (*κεύθος*) means "depth".[133]

---

[126] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%BB%CE%B9%CF%83%CF%83%CF%8C%CF%82]

[127] [https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%92%CF%81%CE%B9%CE%BB%CE%B7%CF%84%CF%84%CF%8C%CF%82]

[128] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%B3%CE%B1%CF%81%CE%B3%CE%B1%CE%AF%CF%81%CF%89]

[129] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%B3%CE%AC%CF%81%CE%B3%CE%B1%CF%81%CE%B1]

[130] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%E1%BC%B0%CE%BB%CE%AF%CF%83%CF%83%CE%B1%CE%B9]

[131] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%E1%BC%B0%CE%BB%CF%8D%CF%82]

[132] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%BA%CE%B5%CF%8D%CE%B8%CF%89]

[133] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%BA%CE%B5%CF%8D%CE%B8%CE%BF%CF%82]

Thus, the names of both major rivers of Attica (Ilissus and Cephissus) are associated with the quantities of mud they carried.

Lycabettos (*Λυκαβηττός*)

From *lykabas* (*λυκάβας*= year). Hence the words *lyke* (*λύκη*= light, day), and *lykavges* (*λυκαυγές*= dawn).[134]

As we saw above for words ending in *-nthos* (with a root ending in *n*, and suffix *-thos*), so the toponyms of Attica and similar words ending in *-sos* can be produced in the same way. The name *labyrinthos* (< **labyrins*, **λαβύρινς*), for example, could be equivalently converted to **labyrinsos*/ **labyrissos* (**λαβύρινσος*/ **λαβύρισσος*). The clusters *-nth-*, or *-ss-* and *-tt-*, are produced by the transformations of the same language, they do not come from another language. In other words, it seems that the Greek language evolved from the earlier Pelasgian idiom.

Rest of suffixes

Suffix *-si*

One of the toponyms that contain the suffix *-sos* is *Kyparissos* (*Κυπάρισσος*) in Aetolia-Acarnania, or in Laconia. The same name refers to a hero of Greek mythology, but also to *kyparissos*, or *kyparissi* (*κυπαρίσσι*= cypress tree), in modern Greek. The form *khamaikyparis/ khamaikyparissos* (*χαμαικύπαρις/ χαμαικυπάρισσος*) is also attested,[135] implying an original form *kyparis* (*κύπαρις*). Therefore, the word probably comes from the fusion of root and suffix, as **kyparin-sos/ kyparis-sos*→ *kyparissos* (**κυπάριν-σος/ κυπάρισ-σος*→ *κυπάρισσος*).

The etymology of the word is unknown, but here we are more interested in the suffix *-si* in the word *kyparissi*. Such an suffix is found in the toponyms *Melesi* (*Μήλεσι*) in Attica, *Delesi* (*Δήλεσι*) in Boeotia, etc. However, I was impressed by the onomastic similarity between the toponyms

[134] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%BB%CF%8D%CE%BA%CE%B7]

[135] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CF%87%CE%B1%CE%BC-]

Dimeni (*Διμήνι*) in Thessaly and *Dmanisi* in Georgia in the Caucasus. In the latter country there are many place names with the suffix *-si* (such as the capital *Tbilisi*), as well as words ending in *-li* (for example, *shvili* in Georgian means "child").[136]) Also, just as the suffix *-si* (*-σι*) appears in Greek toponyms, so the suffix *-li* (*-λι*) appears in Greek words (for example the diminutives *mikrouli* (*μικρούλι*= "smally"), *chazouli* (*χαζούλι*= "silly"), and so on). In other words, I was wondering if there could be a connection between the first farmers who are thought to have come to Greece from the Caucasus and Anatolia at the beginning of the Neolithic Period,[137] and the first inhabitants of *Dimeni* in Thessaly, which is considered to have been inhabited since 4,800 BC.[138]

It is also worth mentioning that the suffix *-si* reappears in the Greek language in the declension of nouns, or in the conjugation of verbs. For example, we have the dative case *pasi(n)* (*πᾶσι(ν)*= "to all"), or the third person plural *poiousi(n)* (*ποιοῦσι(ν)*= "they make"), respectively.

Finally, we must point out the significant degree of correlation between the suffixes *-si* (*-σι*) and *-sos* (*-σος*). For example, we have from Strabo's *Geography* the city *Tilphousion* (*Τιλφούσιον*), the mountain *Tilphossion* (*Τιλφωσσίον*), and the spring *Tilphossa* (*Τιλφῶσσα*). We have three more variations of the same toponym *Eleon*/ *Elos*/ *Eilesi(on)*, (*Ἑλεὼν*/ *Ἕλος*/ *Εἰλέσι(ον)*), which shows the overlap between the suffixes *-on*, *-os*, and *-si*, (*-ων*/*-ος*/*-σι*), respectively. All these examples show that the same roots or themes reoccur with similar suffixes, as well as that similar suffixes intertwine with each other in the context of the same single language.

Suffix *-ros*/*-ra*/*-ri*

These suffix represents a major category of suffixes in Greek toponyms, as well as in Greek words. Some of the toponyms with such suffix mentioned in Strabo's *Geography* are the following: *Stenyklaros*, *Epidavros limera*, *Kytheros* (city), *Kythera* (island), *Phaleros/Phalara*, *Kalliaros* (compare *Cagliari* in Italy), *Oliaros*, *Paros*, *Andros*, *Aptera*, *Corcyra*, *Thera*, *Megara*, *Fabra*, etc.

[136] [https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/%E1%83%A8%E1%83%95%E1%83%98%E1%83%9A%E1%83%98]

[137] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Early_European_Farmers]

[138] [https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%94%CE%B9%CE%BC%CE%AE%CE%BD%CE%B9]

I could also include some toponyms such as *Amyklai*, *Thermopylai*, *Skyllaion*, *Kynos kefalai, Margala*, *Astypalaia, Koila*, *Kallas*, with similar suffixes -*la* instead of -*ra*, or -*a(l)los* instead of -*aros*, but I will avoid it, on the one hand so as not to create confusion, and on the other hand because the suffix -*allos/-allas*, as for example in the toponym *Kallas*, will be examined separately below, where it will be shown that such themes are widespread throughout Europe.

Indicatively, however, in relation to the widespread distribution of toponyms ending in -*ra*, I will mention *Fabra* (today's Greek island *of Flebes*), *Bhabra* in Pakistan,[139] and *Bhabhra* in India.[140] There is also the surname *Fabra* from the Iberian Peninsula, and it comes from the Latin word *faber*, which means "craftsman" or "blacksmith".[141] This word has an IE etymology, but obviously the origin of such place names far predates the arrival of the peoples of the Steppes (i.e. the "IE"), as *Flebes* in Greece has been inhabited since the 3rd millennium BC.[142] As far as the latter name is concerned, it can be derived from an anagram of the earlier name *Fabra* (**Fraba/*Flaba/Fleba*).

Words with suffixes similar to those of the toponyms we have just seen, are the following: *plemmyra* (*πλημμύρα*= flood), *porphyra* (*πορφύρα*= purple dye), *thyra* (*θύρα*= door), *pyra* (*πυρά*= fire), *tromara* (*τρομάρα*= scare), *phagoura* (*φαγούρα*= itch), *sphaliara* (*σφαλιάρα*= slap), *saligari* (*σαλιγκάρι*= snail), *aginara* (*αγκινάρα*= artichoke), *gephyra* (*γέφυρα*= bridge), *zephyros* (*ζέφυρος*= westerly wind), *laphyra* (*λάφυρα*= booty), *pheggari* (*φεγγάρι*= moon), and so on.

In these examples, we see the suffix -*ros*/-*ra*-/*ri* appearing for the three genders (masc./fem./neut., respectively). A similar case concerns the suffix -*r*, for example in words such as *rhetor*/ *rhetorissa* (*ρήτωρ*/ *ρητόρισσα*), *hydor*/ *hydra* (*ύδωρ*/ *ύδρα*), *pyr*/ *pyra* (*πυρ*/ *πυρά*), *korys*/ *koryr* (*κόρυς*/

[139] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bhabra]

[140] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bhavra]

[141] [https://www.wisdomlib.org/names/fabra#:~:text=Background%2C%20origin%20and%20meaning%20of,Spain%2C%20Uruguay%2C%20Italy%2C%20France]

[142] [https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%A6%CE%BB%CE%AD%CE%B2%CE%B5%CF%82_%CE%91%CE%BD%CE%B1%CF%84%CE%BF%CE%BB%CE%B9%CE%BA%CE%AE%CF%82_%CF%84%CF%84%CE%B9%CE%BA%CE%AE%CF%82]

κόρυρ), *Kleitor*/ *Kleitoria* (*Κλείτωρ*/ *Κλειτορία*), etc. In one of these names (*rhetorissa*) we see the reappearance of the "pre-Greek" suffix -*issa*. The suffix -*ria* in *Kleitor/Kleitoria* represents the evolution of the suffix -*ra* into *ria*, with the addition of the semi-vowel *i*.

Are the place names and words mentioned above "Greek" or "pre-Greek?" Let's take for example the word *pyr*/*pyra* (Proto-Greek root *pāwər*, PIE root *péh₂wr̥*, with the meaning of "fire").[143] If this word has an IE etymology, then the same will be true for the city *Pyrra* in Lesvos island (or similarly for the wife *Pyrrha* of Deucalion). If we take the word *hydor/hydra* (Proto-Greek root *údōr*, PIE root *wódr̥*)[144] as another example, is the *Lernaean Hydra* (*Λερναία Ύδρα*) Greek, or is the name *Hydra* Greek, while the name of the toponym *Lerna* is pre- Greek? Are *Ydata Stygos* (*Ύδατα Στυγός*= "waters of (the river) Styx")[145] Greek names, or is *Styx* a linguistic loan from some invisible pre-Greek people?

As far as *Styx* (*Στύξ*) is concerned, the word is of uncertain etymology, although in all likelihood it is associated with the verb *stygeo*/*stygo* (*στυγέω*/*στυγῶ*), and words such as *stygnos* (*στυγνός*), or *stygeros* (*στυγερός*), "awesome").[146] As far as Lerna is concerned, it has been inhabited since the 6th millennium BC.[147] The name has been thought to derive from the Hattian prefix *Le*-, plus the word *arinna*, or *arna*, meaning "spring".[148] The toponym *Arna* reappears in other regions of Greece, and the prefix *Le* or *La* is found in many place names, such as *Larymna*, *Lebitha*, *Larisa*, and so on.

Even if we assume that such names were given by Neolithic farmers who came to Greece from Anatolia (where the Hattians were also located), as is believed today, this does not mean that such

---

[143] [https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/%CF%80%E1%BF%A6%CF%81]

[144] [https://el.wiktionary.org/wiki/%E1%BD%95%CE%B4%CF%89%CF%81]

[145] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mavroneri]

[146] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CF%83%CF%84%CF%85%CE%B3%CE%AD%CF%89]

[147] [https://www.argolisculture.gr/en/list-of-monuments/archaeological-site-of-lerna-house-of-tiles-stone-enclosure/#:~:text=The%20settlement%20of%20Lerna%20on,towers%20on%20the%20south%20side.]

[148] [https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/%CE%9B%CE%AD%CF%81%CE%BD%CE%B7#:~:text=The%20name%20Lerna%20is%20suggested,well'%2C%20'source'.]

names have not been incorporated into the Greek language, constituting its own elements, while the Hattians have disappeared. In other words, to say that such names as *Lerna*, *Larymna*, *Lebitha*, *Larisa*, etc.*,* are pre-Greek does not make any sense, on the one hand because they are still in use, and on the other hand because there are no other "IE" names to replace them.

As far as *Hydra* is concerned*,* let's also mention the islands of *Hydra* and *Hydroussa*. The latter island has a suffix *-ous/-oussa* (*-ους*/*-ουσσα*) which has also been considered pre-Greek (such as the toponym *Ramnous*), although as we have already seen the suffixes *-s*/*-sa* (*-ς*/*-σα*), here with the variant *-ous*/*-oussa*, have nothing pre-Greek. The same can also be said for words with suffixes *-ros*/*-ra*/*-ri*, some of which we mentioned above. For example:

plemmyra (*πλημμύρα*= flood)
The word is related to the verb *myro/mormyro* (*μύρω*/*μορμύρω*= to murmur), and is reduced to the IE root *murmur*-, which arises by imitation of the sound made by running water.[149] How come IE peoples were the first to think of the sound that water makes?

porphyra (*πορφύρα*= purple dye)
A word of unknown etymology, which is related to both the color (purple dye), and the sea snail (murex) which the dye was produced from. Derivative words are *porphyros* (*πορφυρός*= purple), *porphyrizo* (*πορφυρίζω*= to become purple), etc.[150]

gephyra (*γέφυρα*= bridge)
The word is found in different variants, such as the Boeotian *bephyra* (*βέφυρα*), the Laconic *diphoura* (*δίφουρα*), or the Cretan *depyra* (*δέπυρα*). We also have the word *gorgyra/ gergyra* (*γόργυρα*/ *γέργυρα*= sewer), which is considered to be of unknown etymology.[151]

saligari (*σαλιγκάρι*= snail)

[149] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%BC%CE%BF%CF%81%CE%BC%CF%8D%CF%81%CF%89]
[150] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CF%80%CE%BF%CF%81%CF%86%CF%8D%CF%81%CE%B1]
[151] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%B3%CE%AD%CF%86%CF%85%CF%81%CE%B1]

The word is considered to be of medieval origin, and is related to the word *salio* (*σάλιο*= saliva).[152] However, the root *sal-* is generally related to water, and is found in many Greek words, e.g. *thalassa* (sea), *alas* (salt), *salos* (stir), etc., showing thus its earlier origin.

aginara (*αγκινάρα*= artichoke)
The ancient Greek word was *kynara*/*kinara* (*κυνάρα*/*κινάρα*),[153] and it is considered of unknown etymology.

laphyra (*λάφυρα*= loot)
The word also appears as *phalyra* (*φάλυρα*). It is considered to derive from the verb *lambano* (*λαμβάνω*= to receive).[154] However, the variant *phalyra* refutes the previous etymology. Thus, this is another word of unknown etymology.

zephyros (*ζέφυρος*= westerly wind)
Hence the words *zophos* (*ζόφος*), *dnophos* (*δνόφος*), *gnophos* (*γνόφος*), *knephos*> *nephos* (*κνέφος*> *νέφος*), with the meaning of darkness, or dusk.[155] These are words which, like *zephyros*, are of uncertain etymology.

I believe that these examples are enough to show that such words, whose etymology is uncertain or has been lost, are not exceptions to the Greek vocabulary but, if we include their variants and possible derivatives, they constitute the majority. In other words, if we consider all these words "pre-Greek" then there will be nothing left in the Greek vocabulary that is "Greek".

Suffix *-mna*/*-nna*

I quote some place names from Strabo's *Geography* ending in *-(m)na*/*-(n)na*, or *-rna*, from Greece:

---

152 [https://el.wiktionary.org/wiki/%CF%83%CE%B1%CE%BB%CE%B9%CE%B3%CE%BA%CE%AC%CF%81%CE%B9]

153 [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%BA%CE%B9%CE%BD%CE%AC%CF%81%CE%B1]

154 [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%BB%CE%AC%CF%86%CF%85%CF%81%CE%B1]

155 [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%B6%CE%AD%CF%86%CF%85%CF%81%CE%BF%CF%82]

Kalymna, *Erymnai*, *Larymna*, *Likymnion*/*Likymna*, *Limnai*/ *Limnaion*, *Prosymna*, *Diktynna*, *Pelinnaion*, *Arpina*, *Gortyna*, *Alikyrna*, *Yrmine*/*Ormina*/*Yrmina*, *Pellana*/*Pellene*, *Phalasarna*, *Proerna*, *Therapnai*, and so on.

These place names are very widespread. They are so widespread in Greece that many important cities bear such suffixes, e.g. *Athena*, *Raphena* (compare *Ravenna* in Italy), *Mycenai*/*Mycena*, *Larymna*, *Methymna*, *Rethymno*, *Gortyna* (compare *Cortona* or *Crotone,* in Italy), *Diktynna*, etc.

The distribution of such suffixes extends from the Western Mediterranean to the Near East, at least. Compare, for example, *Barcelona* and *Catalonia* (*Cataluña*) in Spain, *Madinah* in Saudi Arabia, *Vienna* (*Wenia*) in Austria, and so on.

Perhaps the reasoning may seem far-fetched, but the distribution indicates the opposite, if we recall the example of *Qurna* mentioned above (*Al Qurnah* in Iraq, *Qurna* in Egypt, *A Coruña* in Spain, *Kyrnos*> Corsica, *Korone* in Greece, etc.).

As far as *Gortyna* (*Γόρτυνα*) is concerned, the name exists both in Crete and in Arcadia. Gortyna in Crete has been inhabited since the 3rd millennium BC.[156] For Gortyna in Arcadia, there is no information as to when it was first inhabited, but according to Greek mythology the founder of the city was *Gortys* from Tegea in Arcadia.[157] The name *Gortyna* refers to *Karytaina* (*Καρύταινα*), which is located nearby. So probably **gortyn* (**γόρτυν*) is the earlier name for *karyon* (*κάρυον*= walnut). *Gortyna* therefore means "walnut-tree". Today's Karytaina is located in the area of ancient *Brenthe*.[158] This is another name which bears the famous proto-Greek (although considered pre-

156

[https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%93%CF%8C%CF%81%CF%84%CF%85%CE%BD%CE%B1_%CE%9A%CF%81%CE%AE%CF%84%CE%B7%CF%82]

157

[https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%93%CF%8C%CF%81%CF%84%CF%85%CE%BD%CE%B1_%CE%91%CF%81%CE%BA%CE%B1%CE%B4%CE%AF%CE%B1%CF%82]

158

[https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%9A%CE%B1%CF%81%CF%8D%CF%84%CE%B1%CE%B9%CE%BD%CE%B1]

Greek) cluster *-nth-*. So we see that such suffixes *-yns/-ynna/-yn* (*-υνς/-υννα/-υν*), with any variations, were widespread in Greece. The suffix *-aina* in *Karytaina* simply hides the oldest form *-y(n)na* in *Gorty(n)na*, but evolved from it.

The suffix *-na* in toponyms from Etruria is also characteristic. *Wikipedia* has an illustrating picture with place names in its article on Etruria.[159] For example, *Fufluna*, *Vetluna*, *Velchna*, *Tarchna* (compare *Trachinia* in Greece, or *Tarxien* in Malta), *Velzna*, *Clevsina*, *Curtuna* (compare *Crotone* in Italy or *Gortyna* in Greece), and so on. The Etruscans seem to have been obsessed with this suffix. However, the Etruscans are considered pre-Indo-Europeans. If this is the case, then the corresponding place names in Greece must be considered pre-Greek.

However, even the most difficult toponyms can find Greek etymology. Take for example *Larymna* in Boeotia. The word *ryme*/*rymne* (*ῥύμη/ρύμνη*= crack, alley) is etymologized from the verb *eryo* (*ἐρύω*= to draw, to pull).[160] The prefix *La* may be related to *laas* (*λᾶας*= stone), or it may be a kind of article. Therefore *Larymna*= "the (stone) alley". We will talk about such prefixes below, and see how deep back in time the origin of the Greek language can be traced. But if *Larymna* and *Gortyna* can be etymologized in Greek, then *Methymna* (*Μήθυμνα*), *Diktynna* (*Δίκτυννα*) or *Rethymno* (*Ρέθυμνο*) could too. In other words, it is a matter of willingness and available data.

Apart from place names, there are many common words in the Greek language that contain the same suffix. For example: *korymna* (*κόρυμνα*= necklace), *krommyon* (*κρόμμυον*= onion), *limna*/*limne* (*λίμνα*/*λίμνη*= lake), as well as *limen* (*λιμήν*= port) and *leimon* (*λειμών*= meadow), *lamno* (*λάμνω*= to row), *merimna* (*μέριμνα*= solicitude), *velemnon* (*βέλεμνον*= arrow), *poimna*/*poimne* (*ποίμνα*/*ποίμνη*= flock of sheep), hence *poimen* (*ποιμήν*= shepherd), *demnion* (*δέμνιον*= bedstead), from the verb *demo (δέμω*= to construct, to build), *prymnos*/*prymna* (*πρυμνός*/*πρύμνα*= stern), *thamna*/*thamnos* (*θάμνα*/*θάμνος*= shrub), *thelymna*/*themethla* (*θέλυμνα*/*θέμεθλα*= foundation), *skodamna*/*raphanos* (*σκονδάμνα*/*ῥάφανος*= the rapeseed plant), *stromna*/*stromne* (*στρωμνά*/*στρωμνή*= mattress), *chelymna* (*χέλυμνα*= turtle), and so on.[161]

[159] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Etruria]

[160] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CF%81%CF%8D%CE%BC%CE%B7]

[161] [https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/resolveform?type=end&lookup=mna&lang=greek]

The word *korymna* has the same root as the words *kory(n)thos* and *kory(n)na* that we saw above, but bears the suffix *-mna*/*-nna* instead of *-nthos*/*-ntha.* In some cases, the *n* is omitted from the suffix *-mna* (e.g. *prymne/pryme*, *stromnos*/*stroma*). In other cases the *m* is omitted, e.g. *chelymna> chelona* (*χέλυμνα> χελώνα*), *damnon> deinon* (*δαμνόν> δεινόν*), etc. Also, the entire cluster *-mn-* can be omitted, e.g. *belemnos> belos* (*βέλεμνος> βέλος*), while in other cases the cluster is extended by the addition of a vowel, e.g. *poimna*/*poimen* (*ποίμνα*/*ποιμήν*). Many other common words have such transformations, e.g. *kremnos> gremos* (*κρημνός> γκρεμός*= cliff), *kremannymi* (*κρεμάννυμι*= to hang),[162] hence the word *kremastra* (*κρεμάστρα*= hanger), etc.

If we did not know the etymologies of these words, we would not know their origin, and we would consider the earlier forms "pre-Greek". On the contrary, **Thelymna*, where *lymnos* (*λυμνός*= naked)[163] + the prefix *The* (*Θε*), with the meaning "to set" (thus **Thelymna*= "city founded on bare ground"), could well be a toponym with a Greek etymology, as we saw before for *Larymna*.

The suffix *-mna*/*-nna* (*-μνα*/*-ννα*) evolved into the more familiar suffix *-nia/-naia* (*-νια*/*-ναία*), e.g. *Gortyna* (*Γόρτυνα*) for the city, *Gortynia* (*Γορτυνία*) for the region, or *Mytilenia/ Mytilenaia* (*Μυτιληνιά*/ *Μυτιληναία*) for the resident of *Mytilene* (*Μυτιλήνη*). The suffix can also be found in the form *-menos*/*-mene*/*-meno(n)* (*-μένος*/*-μένη*/*-μένο(ν)*) in participles, e.g. *agapemenos*/ *agapemene/ agapemeno* (*αγαπημένος*/ *αγαπημένη*/ *αγαπημένο*), meaning "beloved". It is also worth mentioning that the cluster *-mn-*/*-nn-* can be produced smoothly within the framework of the Greek language, as we saw previously for the clusters *-nth-* or *-ss-*. For example, *Gortynna* can be derived from the root **gortyn*, with a suffix *-na* (**Gortyn-na*).

In a similar way, the characteristic suffix *-rna* can be derived from the fusion of a root ending in *-r* and the suffix *-na*. For example, the word *smyrna* (*σμύρνα*), otherwise *zmyrna*, *(s)myrra*, **smyrina*, *smyraina*, *myrna* (*ζμύρνα*, *(σ)μύρρα*, **σμύρινα*, *σμύραινα*, *μύρνα*). The word is associated with the type *myrra* (*μύρρα*= fragrant juice, aromatic plant), and with the toponym

[162] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%BA%CF%81%CE%B7%CE%BC%CE%BD%CF%8C%CF%82]

[163] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%BB%CF%85%CE%BC%CE%BD%CF%8C%CF%82]

Smyrna.[164] Some have attributed Semitic origin to the word *smyrna*, but this does not explain the Asia Minor toponym *Smyrna*. The verb *myrizo* (*μυρίζω*= to smell) is of the same origin.[165] Obviously, both peoples, Semites and Anatolians, as well as the Greek Pelasgians, used words with the same roots deep in the past.

Similar is the word *smerna* (*σμέρνα*= moray eel), with the equivalent forms *smyrna*, *smyraina*, *myraina* (*σμύρνα*, *σμύραινα*, *μύραινα*). Obviously the suffix *-rna* is transformed here into a suffix *-raina*, with the addition of the diphthong *ai*. The word, however, is probably related to *smerdnos*/*smerdaleos* (*σμερδνός*/*σμερδαλέος*= awesome in appearance).[166] Here the *-dn-* complex, the symmetric of the cluster *-nd-*, which we have already examined, reappears.

Such a way of composing the suffix of names in *-rna* (i.e. *smyr-*/*smer-* + *-na*= *smyrna/ smerna*) could also explain the origin of place names that are difficult to etymologize in the Greek language, for example *Lerna* or *Phalasarna*. We have already talked about *Lerna* (about the prefix *Le* and the word *arna*/*arinna*= spring). Here we can supplement by saying that the word *arna* is formed by the root *ar-* and the suffix *-na* (i.e. *ar-* + *-na* = *arna*).

We can make similar reasoning about *Phalasarna* (*Φαλάσαρνα*). I found an interesting analysis of the word on the internet. The prefix *Pha* is found in *phaos/phos* (*φάος*/*φώς*= light), hence the verb *phaino* (*φαίνω*= to illuminate), *phaeinos* (*φαεινός*= bright), etc. The prefix, or imperative particle, *La*/*Lai* (as in the word *Phalairon* (*Φάλαιρον*)> *Phaleron* (*Φάληρον*)), functions emphatically (as in the word *lailaps* (*λαίλαψ*= whirlwind), where *lapto* (*λάπτω*)= to drink greedily, to gulp down). Also, the root *ar-* has the meaning of "earth". The letter *σ* is also added to the word to avoid hiatus, while the suffix is *-na*. So *Phalasarna* means "bright land", "sunny place".[167]

Phalasarna is thought to have been first inhabited during the Middle Minoan period (from the 2nd millennium BC). Lerna, however, has been inhabited since the 6th millennium BC, as we have

[164] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CF%83%CE%BC%CF%8D%CF%81%CE%BD%CE%B1]

[165] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CF%83%CE%BC%CF%85%CF%81%CE%AF%CE%B6%CF%89]

[166] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CF%83%CE%BC%CE%B5%CF%81%CE%B4%CE%BD%CF%8C%CF%82]

[167] [https://sadentrepese.blogspot.com/2022/11/blog-post_56.html]

already mentioned. This provides the necessary time for prefixes of the form *Pha* or *La* to be fused into more complex roots of the form *phal(a)*-, such as the word *phalaina* (*φάλαινα*= whale). This way of reconstructing words helps us find out that even the most "bizarre", or difficult to spell, place names or common words can have Greek etymology.

Suffix *-kos/-pos/-tos*

I included this suffix because there are several toponyms that Strabo lists in his *Geography*, and of which several are preserved to this day. I have divided this suffix into subcategories, and below I will explain how these subcategories are related to each other. For example:

-kos/-ka

Dirke, *Trikke*, *Keos*/*Kos*, *Lykaion*, *Lyrkeion*, *Lykeion*, *Ylike*, *Elike*, *Ithake*, *Phylake*, *Nikaia*, *Chalkia*, *Lefkas* (city), *Lefkas* (island), *Ikos*, *Iolkos*, *Astakos*, *Ambrakia*, *Krokion*, *Phoinikis*, *Phoinikion*.

Also, -*kas*: *Koryx*, *Phoinix*, *Atrax*, *Korax*.

Also, -*ikos: Lakonike*/*Lakonikos, Triphyliake*, *Pylaikos*, *Phalerikon*.

-pos/pa

Euripos, *Aigilipa*, *Copai*, *Alope*, *Conopa*, *Knopia*, *Ellopia*, *Dolopia*, *Kekropia*, *Messapion*, *Aipy*.

Also, -*opos: Asopos*, *Oropos*, *Inopos*, *Enipeus*, *Panopeus*> *Phanoteus*.

-tos/-tas

Eurytos, *Neritos*, *Kairatos*, *Nafpaktos, Akritas*, *Stratos*, *Stratie*, *Khelonatas*, *Thouriates*, *Prote*, *Krithote*, *Sparte*, *Oitaia*, *Oitaion*, *Lyttos*/*Lyktos*, *Elateia*, *Plataiai*, *Ptoon*.

Also -*tis*: *Pisatis*, *Bleminatis*, *Kastnietis*, *Aliartis*, *Estiaiotis*, *Megalopolitis*, etc.

Although these suffixes could be divided into independent categories, I decided to include them within the same group. The correlation that can be made between them is also shown by the ambiguity of the same suffix or syllable *qo* in the Mycenaean Linear B script. For example, we have *a-to-ro-qo* (*anthropos*, *άνθρωπος*= "human"), *a-pi-qo-ro* (*amphipolos*, *αμφίπολος*= attendant), *qa-si-re-u* (*basileus, βασιλεύς*= king), *qe* (> *ge*/*te*, *γε*/*τε*> *kai*, *και*= "and"), *qe-qi-no-me-*

no (*geginomenos*, *γεγινομένος*= "already made"), etc. That is, the same syllable *qo* is expressed in modern Greek as *pos*, *ba*, *ge*, *te*, *ke*, *gi*, (*πος*, *βα*, *γε*, *τε*, *κε*, *γι*), and so on.

The previous suffix or syllable *qo* can also be considered analogous to the Latin *quo*/*quis*, corresponding to the Greek *pou*, *poios*/*tis* (*ποῦ*, *ποῖος*/*τίς*= "where?", "who?"). In other words, this suffix evolved into suffixes of the form -*opos*, -*otos*, -*otas*, -*otis*, -*ikos* (-*ωπός*, -*ωτός*, -*ώτας*, -*ώτις*, -*ικός*), and so on. For example, we have the pair *Panopeus*> *Phanoteus* (*Πανοπεύς*> *Φανοτεύς*), where the last consonant of the root *p* becomes *t*. The suffix -*eus* will be mentioned separately below.

In other cases, the suffixes are extended with the addition of a vowel. For example, *Phoinikis*/ *Phoinikion*, *Konopa*/ *Knopia*, **Ellopa*/*Ellopia* (*Φοινικίς*/ *Φοινίκιον*, *Κωνώπα*/ *Κνωπία*, **Ἐλλόπα*/ *Ἐλλοπία*), and so on. Such suffixes as -*ios*/-*ia*/-*ion* (-*ιος*/-*ια*/-*ιον*) can be considered subsequent, evolving from the previous ones, in the context of the same language. We will return to these suffixes when we mention the generic suffix -*s*.

As far as the previous toponyms are concerned, we can make some general observations, as we did in the analysis of toponyms with other suffixes. For example, by comparing the toponyms *Lykaion*, *Lykeion*, *Lyrkeion* (*Λυκαίον*, *Λύκειον*, *Λυρκείον*) and *Lyktos*/*Lyttos* (*Λύκτος*/*Λύττος*), we see the relationship between the suffixes -*kos*/-*ktos*/-*ttos* (-*κος*/-*κτος*/-*ττος*). Of course, to consider the last suffix -*ttos* (as it has been considered by some) "pre-Greek", and the other two, -*kos*/-*ktos*, "Greek", is absurd.

As far as the toponyms *Koryx*, *Phoinix*, *Korax* (*Κώρυξ*, *Φοίνιξ*, *Κόραξ*) are concerned, these are names with a root ending in *k* (*κ*), and a suffix -*s* (-*ς*). I included them here because of their modern Greek equivalents, *korykas*> *kerykas* (*κώρυκας*> *κήρυκας* = herald), *phoinikas* (*φοίνικας*= *phoenix*), *korakas* (*κόρακας*= raven). Perhaps most of such suffixes are of this origin, with the combination of the final consonant of the root and the suffix -*s*. In other words, just as from the combination of the root *koryn*- and the suffix -*s* we get the form *kory(n)s*> *kory(n)thos*, as we saw above, so from the combination of the root *korak*- and the suffix -*s* we get the form **koraks/korax*> *korakas*.

I could include here more place names, such as *Thebai* (*Θήβαι*= Thebes), a city which in the Mycenaean Linear B Script is written as *te-qa*, ending in *-ka* (the feminine equivalent of *-kos*). However, I will mention the previous and similar place names separately, for the sake of clarity, below.

One could consider these suffixes, with the general form *-q^{w}os*, as the pre-eminently "IE" suffixes. However, this category also includes the "strange" suffixes *-ax* or *-ops*, which some would consider "pre-Greek", when in fact they are just as Greek as all the previous suffixes we saw (e.g. *-nna*, *-rna*, *-ssos*, *-nthos*, and so on).

For this reason, I would like here to refer to the specific suffix *-opos/ope* (*ωπός/-ωπή*) which appears in toponyms such as *Kopai*, *Alope*, *Konopa*, *Knopia*, *Elopia*, *Dolopia*, *Kekropia,* etc. The word *ops*/*ope* (*ὤψ*/*ὠπή*= eye, face) is considered to be related to the PIE root *h₃okw-* /*h₃ekw-* (that where the eyes are located), with related words the German *auge*, the Swedish *öga*, the Latin *oculus*, and the Lithuanian *akìs*.[168]

Obviously the suffix *-opos/ope* is a descriptive suffix of the previous toponyms, just as in the modern Greek language we say *kitrinopos* (*κιτρινωπός*= yellowish), *agriopos* (*αγριωπός*= one who looks wild), and so on.

Although *Wiktionary* gives an etymology for *ops*/*ope*, or even for the place name *Kopa* (*Κώπα*, from the PIE root *keh₂p-*, "to occupy, to grasp",[169] it cannot provide an etymology for another toponym, *Phylakope* (*Φυλακωπή*), whose name contains the word *phylax* (*φύλαξ*= guardian) or *phylakion* (*φυλάκιον*= outpost). The word *phylax* has been considered to have an uncertain etymology because the suffix *-ax* has not been interpreted.[170] The same applies to the suffix *-ops/-ope*, because it appears in words difficult to interpret, such as *Kyklops* (*Κύκλωψ*), *Pelops* (*Πέλοψ*), *Kekrops* (*Κέκρωψ*), *klops* (*κλώψ*), *drops* (*δρώψ*), *liparops* (*λιπαρώψ*), *lope* (*λώπη*), and so on.

[168] [https://el.wiktionary.org/wiki/%E1%BD%A4%CF%88]

[169] [https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/%CE%BA%CF%8E%CF%80%CE%B7]

[170] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CF%86%CF%8D%CE%BB%CE%B1%CE%BE]

First of all, regarding the suffix *-ax*/*-akas* (*-αξ*/*-ακας*) it is similar in morphology to *-ops*/*-opas* (*-ωψ*/*-ωπας*), which is contained in the name *Phylakope*, and it is particularly common in the Greek language. For example, we have the words *phoinix* (*φοίνιξ*= phoenix), *korax* (*κόραξ*= crow), *kolax* (*κόλαξ*= flatterer), *tettix* (*τέττιξ*= cicada), *myrmex* (*μύρμηξ*= ant), *phormigx* (*φόρμιγξ*= phorminx), *larygx* (*λάρυγξ*= larynx), and so on. The suffix *-ops*/*-opas* (*ωψ*/*-ωπας*) is just as common, as for example in the words *drops* (*δρώψ*= man), *klops*> *kleptes* (*κλώψ*> *κλέπτης*= thief), *konops* (*κώνωψ*= mosquito), *kynops* (*κύνωψ*= one who looks like a dog), *knips*> *sknipa* (*κνίψ*> *σκνίπα*= gnat), *seps*> *sepse* (*σήψ*> *σήψη*= sepsis), *skops*> *skoptikos* (*σκώψ*> *σκωπτικός*= scoffing), *myops* (*μύωψ*= myope), *molops* (*μώλωψ*= bruise), *lailaps* (*λαίλαψ*= whirlwind), etc. To say that all these words are pre-Greek does not make sense, because then there will be no Greek language left.

Secondly, if the suffix is *-ax*/*-akas* (*-αξ*/*-ακας*) then the original root of the word *phylax* is *phyl-* (*φυλ-*), not *phylak-* (*φυλακ-*). This becomes more understandable if we remember that the ancient Greek verb *phylasso* (*φυλάσσω*= to guard) has become *phylao/phylo* (*φυλάω*/*φυλώ*) in the modern Greek language, hence the words *phylon*, *phyle*, *phytra*, *phyra* (*φύλον*, *φυλή*, *φύτρα*, *φύρα*), and so on. The latter words are etymologized from the verb *phyo* (*φύω*= to give birth, to sprout), bearing the IE root *bheu-*, meaning "to grow, to develop".[171] Hence the toponym of Attica *Phyle*.

Therefore, both the suffix *-ops*/*-ope*, or *-ops*/*-opas*, and the suffix *-ax*/*-akas* are as Greek as the suffixes *pos*/*-opos*, *-kos*/*-ikos*, *-tos*/*-tas*/*-otas*, etc., as well as the rest of the suffixes that we saw above.

As far as Phylakope is concerned, we will say more below.

Other suffixes

For the sake of completeness, I will include toponyms from Strabo's *Geography* with the following suffixes:

[171] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CF%86%CF%8D%CF%89]

Suffix -*bos*/-*ba*

Aba/*Abai, Thebai*, *Thisbe/Thisbai*, *Lesbos*, *Boibeis/Boibe*, *Euboia*, *Meliboia*, *Orobia/ Orobiai*, *Perraibia*.

Suffix -*phos*/-*pha*

Pheai, *Tarphe*, *Taphos/Taphias*, *Psaphis*, *Anaphe*, *Skarphe*/*Skarpheia*, *Aphetai*, *Alpheios*, *Kyphos*, *Akyphas*, *Akraiphiai*.

In the Mycenaean Linear B Script, in addition to the syllable *qo* (-*qoς*), the syllable *wo* is also used, which is expressed by the letter digamma, *F* (i.e. -*Foς*), which in the modern Greek language can be pronounced either as *v* or as *f*. In such a sense, names ending in -*eus* (-*ευς*) may belong to this category, which is shown from their declension, for example, *βασιλεύς*/ *βασιλέFoς* (*basilefs* (nom.)/ *basilefos* (gen.).

Suffix -*gos*/-*ga*

Aigai/*Aiga*, *Aigaion*, *Aigion*, *Aigys*, *Tegea*, *Argos, Argeia, Tragion, Sphagia, Afgeiai/Aigaiai*, *Pagai*, *Pharygai*, *Pharygion*, *Ortygia*, *Ogygia*, *Amorgos*.

Suffix -*chos/-cha*

Chaa, *Oche*, *Chios*, *Achaia*, *Achaiai*, *Echeiai*, *Anchoe*, *Doulichion*/*Dolicha*, *Lechaion*, *Inachos*, *Proschion*, *Spercheios*, *Mounychia*, *Lysimacheia*.

The two previous suffixes could be included in the -*kos* suffix, in particular the -*gos*/-*ga* suffix (according to *qe> ge (γε)> kai* (*και*)).

Suffix -*das*/-*da*

Ide, *Yde*, *Neda*, *Mideia*/*Midea*, *Dion*, *Rhodos*, *Arkadia*, *Levadeia*, *Tripodes*, *Tenedos*, *Thetideion*, *Poseidion*, *Poseidonia*, *Lichades*, *Echinades*, *Skironides*, *Thyrides*, *Platamodes*, *Nikomedeia*, *Eurykydeion*, *Amphidolida*.

In many cases, the cluster *-nd-* or *-dn-* is hidden in the suffixes of these toponyms. For example, *Lebadeia> Libadeia* (*Λεβάδεια> Λιβαδειά*) may come from an earlier form **Lebandos* (**Λέβανδος*), hence another toponym *Lebinthos* (*Λέβινθος*).

Suffix *-thos/-tha*

Karthaia, *Kynaitha*, *Kinaithion*, *Bathys*, *Pythion*, *Pythoi*, *Lethaios*, *Skiathos*, *Eileithyias* sanctuary.

In the toponym (port) *Bathys* (*Βαθὺς*), the cluster *-nth-* (*-νθ-*) is hidden, i.e. *benthos> bathos* (*βένθος> βάθος*= depth). In other toponyms, we see that the suffix *-thos* is as Greek as the suffix *-nthos*.

Suffix *-mos/-ma*

Arma, *Samos*/*Same*, *Ithome*/*Thome*, *Lamia*, *Kadmeia*, *Thalamai*, *Potamos*, *Kisamos*, *Drymos*, *Patmos*, *Isthmos*, *Mamaos*, *Nemea*, *Olmeios*, *Dyme*, *Knemis*, *Salamis, Trinemeoi*.

This particular category of suffixes, on some occasions, could be considered a variant of suffixes in *-(m)na*/-(*n)na*, that we saw above. However, I thought it was more apropriate to categorize it independently.

Suffix *-stos*

Karystos, *Lykastos*, *Geraestos*, *Kremaste*, *Istiaia*, *Makistia, Makistos*, *Platanistous, Onchestos, Phaistos, Pleistos, Kalliste.*

This category of toponyms ending in *-stos* could be included in the category of toponyms ending in *-ssos* or *-ttos*. However, this is not always the case. While *Lykastos*, for example, could also be written as **Lykassos*, other toponyms such as *Kremaste*, *Phaistos*, *Pleistos*, *Kalliste* could be included in the category with suffixes *-tas*/*tos*.

The generic suffix -s

When I first dealt with the classification of toponyms in Strabo's *Geography* according to their suffixes, I tried to divide them into categories with suffixes *-os*/*-a*/*-on* (*-ος*/*-α*/*-ον*), or *-ios*/*-ia*/*-ion*

(*-ιος*/*-ια*/*-ιον*), or *-on*, *-is*, *-ys*, *ous* (*ων*, *-ις*, *-υς*, *ους*), and so on. I soon realized that this was pointless, because behind such suffixes other, earlier, suffixes were hidden.

For example, in the word *Makedon* (*Μακεδών*), although the word seems to end in *-on* (*-ων*), the cluster *-dn-* is hidden in the earlier or equivalent form *Makednos* (*Μακεδνός*), with a suffix *-nos* (*-νος*). In *Dilesion*, before the suffix *-on* (*-ον*), another suffix *-si* (*-σι*) is hidden (today the toponym is called *Dilesi*). In *Larymna* (behind the *-a*) there is a suffix *-mna*. In *Larissa* the suffix is *-sa* (not *-a*). In *Kissamos* the suffix is *-mos* (not *-os*). In *Salamis* it is *-mis* (not *-is*). The theme of the latter word is the proto-Greek *salas* (sea), not the exotic **salam-*. We will talk about the theme *salas* or *kallas*, below. In *Korynthos* (*Κόρυνθος*) the suffix is *-thos* (*-θος*), in which case the word can be divided as *koryn-thos* (not **korynth*-os), so that the cluster *-nth-* is produced naturally by the combination of the root *koryn-* and the suffix *-thos*.

As far as today's *Dilesi* is concerned, the suffix *-ios*/*-ia*/*-ion* has been abandoned. A similar phenomenon occurs in place names such as *Neochori* (instead *of Neochorion*), or common words such as *paidaki* ("little boy"), instead of *paidakion*. That is why I call the suffixes *-os*/*-a*/*-on* or *-ios*/*-ia*/*-ion* "official", or "academic", because in many cases they are redundant.

These suffixes (which I call "official" because they have been identified with the advent of the "Indo-Europeans" in Greece) arise smoothly from other prior suffixes, within the framework of the Greek language. For example, we have the place names:

**Kynoura*/*Kynouria* (*-ra*/*-ria*), **Hellopa*/*Ellopia* (*-opa*/*-opia*), *Kynos*/*Kynia* (*-na*/*-nia*), *Kyrnos*/*Kyrene* (*-rna*/*-rena*), *Kyrene*/*Kyreneia* (*-na*/*-neia*), *Skarphe*/*Skarpeia* (*-pha*/*-pheia*), *Pharygai*/*Pharygion* (*-ga*/*-gion*), and so on.

For example, the area of *Kynouria* in Arcadia could correspond to a city **Kynoura*. The name *Kynouros* does refer to a Mycenaean prince.[172] That is, the suffix *-ria* arose smoothly from an earlier suffix *-ra*, or perhaps coexisted with it.

[172] [https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%9A%CF%8D%CE%BD%CE%BF%CF%85%CF%81%CE%BF%CF%82]

For *Skarpheia* one could consider some etymology of the form *Skarph-eja*. However, the alternative form *Skarphe* arises as *Skar-phe*, with the suffix *-phe*/*-pha*. In other words, the form *Skarpheia* is obtained by adding the diphthong *ei* to the suffix *-pha* (we have already seen, in the case of the verb *phylasso*, that reconstructing words using the popular IE suffix *-ja* is problematic).

In the triad *Kyrnos*/*Kyrene*/*Keryneia (Κύρνος*/*Κυρήνη*/*Κερύνεια)* we see the evolution of the name of a toponym having an initial suffix *-rnos*/*-rna*, which evolved into *-(e)ne*/*-(y)neia*. Keryneia (modern Kyrenia) is nowadays called *Girne*. In other words, the current name regained its original suffix *-rne/-rna*.

Let's take a look at a few more place names, considering the suffix *-os*/*-a*/*-on* (or *-is* on one occasion):
Salam-is, *Kalam-os Kissam-os*, *Pyrr-a*, *Kirr-a*, *Korinth-os, Lykast-os*, *Iliss-os*, *Dolich-a Kynaeth-a, Larymn-a*, *Phalasarn-a*.

If we do this, we end up with strange "pre-Greek" themes (**salam*-, **kalam*-, **kissam*-, and so on), with arbitrary "Greek" suffixes (*-is*/*-os*/*-a*, and so on).

On the contrary, let's consider the following way of separating the theme or root from the suffix:
Sala-mis, *Kala-mos*, *Kissa-mos, Pyr-ra*, *Kir-ra*, *Korin-thos*, *Lykas-tos*, *Ilis-sos*, or even *Dol-i-cha*, *Kyna-e-tha, La-ry-mna*, *Pha-la-s-ar-na.*

In this way the words and their roots acquire a Greek meaning, and can be etymologized correctly. For example, *Kalamos* is etymologized similarly to *Salamis*, with the use of the theme *ka(l)las*, which has the same meaning as the theme *salas* ("sea"). (About the etymology of *Larymna* and *Phalasarna* we talked above.)

All these examples show that the suffix *-ios*/*-ia*/*-ion* probably standardized the already existing language, without replacing it. In fact, the same suffix in the neuter gender was used in the past for diminutives. For example, *meirakion*, is a diminutive of *meirax* ("young one"). In the modern

Greek language we will simply say *paidaki* (*παιδάκι*), instead *of paidakion* (*παιδάκιον*) discarding the suffix *-(i)on* altogether.

However, words ending in *-x* (*-ξ*), e.g. *meirax, phoinix, korax* (*μείραξ, φοίνιξ, κόραξ*), etc., as well as words ending in *-ps* (*-ψ*), e.g. *lailaps*, *Pelops* (*λαίλαψ*, *Πέλοψ*), etc., which we saw above for place names ending in *-kos/-pos*, contain roots ending in *k* or *p*, and the suffix *-s*. From this suffix with the addition of a vowel, the well-known suffixes *-as/-a* (*-ας/-α*) of the modern Greek language emerged, e.g. *koraks> korakas*, *Pelops> Pelopas*, *lailaps> lailapa* (*κόραξ> κόρακας*, *Πέλοψ> Πέλοπας*, *λαίλαψ> λαίλαπα*), etc.

The same is true for words with roots ending in *-n*, for example *kory(n)s*, which we examined above, or *delphin*, which we will examine soon afterwards, with derived forms *korythos* or *delphinos*, ending in *-os*/*-a*. That *korys* should have an *n* in its root is shown by words such as *korynthos*, or *koryna*, which we saw above. All these types, such as **koryns* or **delphins*, according to *elmins*, *peirins*, *kerins*, which we have encountered previously, bear the suffix *-ς*, from which the subsequent suffixes *-os*/*-ia*/*-on*, *-os*/*-a*/*on*, *-as*/*-a* (*-ος*/*-ια*/*-ον*, *-ος*/*-α-ον*, *-ας*/*-α*), etc., have apparently evolved. That's why I call the suffix *-s* "generic".

The word *delphin* (*δελφίν*= dolphin), which we could also spell with *y* as *delphyn* (*δελφύν*= womb),[173] and which is also attested as *delphis* (*δελφίς*), thus revealing an earlier form **delphins* from which *n* was removed, can lead us to an original root *delph-* with suffix *-in/-yn* (*-ιν*/*-υν*), as this suffix is also attested in toponyms such as *Trahin*, *Leben*, *Gortyn* (*Τραχίν*, *Λεβήν*, *Γόρτυν*), and so on.

Indeed, the word *delphys* is reduced to the IE root *gwelbh-* (womb, young animal).[174] Hence the island of *Belbina* (from the Aeolian type *belphina*[175] for the dolphin). Of course, the fact that such a word has an IE etymology should make us reconsider the origin of the IE languages, as dolphins did not exist in the Steppes.

[173] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%B4%CE%B5%CE%BB%CF%86%CF%8D%CF%82]

[174] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%B4%CE%B5%CE%BB%CF%86%CF%8D%CF%82]

[175] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%B2%CE%AD%CE%BB%CF%86%CE%B9%CE%BD%CE%B5%CF%82]

We have previously mentioned that the name of the toponym *Korynthos/ Korinthos* is probably produced by case regression, i.e. the transfer of the genitive of an earlier type to the nominative of the later type. That is, *korynthos* could have been the genitive case of an earlier form **koryns*, which became *Korynthos*/*Korinthos* in the nominative case later on. We can go a step further, and consider that the form **koryns* could have been the genitive case of an earlier type *koryn*, according to *delphin*, *Leben*, *Trachin*, *Gortyn*, and so on. In other words, our transformation is as follows:

according to *koryn*
kor-yn (nom.) → *kor-yn-s* (gen.)
koryn-s (nom.) → *koryn-thos* (gen.)
korynthos (nom.) → *korynthou* (gen.)

or according to *delphin*
delph-in (nom.) → *delph-in-s* (gen.)
delphin-s (nom.) → *delphin-os* (gen.)
delphinos (nom.) → *delphinou* (gen.)

These transformations are indicative, as in the modern Greek language words such as *delphini* (*δελφίνι*= dolphin), *Delphoi* (*Δελφοί*= Delphi), *adelphos* (*αδελφός*= brother) presuppose a root *delph-*, which can obtain various prefixes or suffixes. As far as the word *Korinthos*/ *Korynthos* is concerned, the transformation shows that the original root of the word is not **korynth-*, with suffix *-os*, but *koryn-*, with suffix *-thos*, so that the cluster *-nth-* is produced naturally by the combination of roots and suffixes.

Another case is the derivation of the suffix *-sos*/*-ssa* with case duplication of the suffix *-s*. I will use for this purpose the Linear B pair *wa-na-ka*/ *wa-na-ka-sa* (*anaks*/*anaksa*).
Thus:
(nom.) *anak-s* (masc.)/ *anak-sa* (fem.) → *anaks*/ *anaksa*> *anax*/ *anassa*
(gen.) *anak-s-os* (masc.)/ *anak-sa-s* (fem.) → *anaksos*/ *anaksas*> *anaktos*/*anassas*

This is why I realized that probably the repetition of the suffix *-s* is an indication of a genitive case, just as it happens in English, e.g. *miss* (nom.)/*miss's* (gen.). The same phenomenon can occur with toponyms and common words such as *Kyparissos*, where it seems that the reproduction of the suffix *-ϛ* occurs, e.g. *kyparis* (cf. *hamaikyparis*) → *kyparis-s* → *kyparissos*, from which process the suffix *-(i)ssos* is naturally derived. In other words, even if we consider the word to be a loan to the Greek language, the cluster *-ss-* is produced within the context of the Greek language.

I consider this generic suffix *-s*/*-sa*/*-n* (> *-os*/*-a*/*-on*) as an inherently Greek suffix, which is ubiquitous in the Greek language, and thanks to which many other suffixes can be formed, such as the subsequent suffixes -(*i)os*, *-(s)sos*, *-(n)thos*/, *-(o)pos*, *-(i)kos*, and so on.

Analysis of themes

According to *Wikipedia*, "Paleo-European" is the term used by Hans Krahe (1964) for the language of the oldest reconstructed substrate of hydronyms in Central and Western Europe, which he himself dated to the 2nd millennium BC.[176]

Krahe used these place names to support his position for a PIE language spoken in Europe. However, many have objected to Krahe's proposal, considering these toponyms to be of Paleo-European (pre-IE) origin.

The theme *ka(l)las/salas*

Wikipedia offers two maps made by Krahe. The first map has hydronyms with the roots *al-*/*alm-*. For example: *Ala*, *Alma*, *Almos, Almana*, *Almara*, *Alantas*, *Alantia*, *Alentia*, *Almantia, Alontas*, and so on.

The second map has hydronyms with the root *sal-*/*salm-*. For example: *Sala*, *Salia*, *Salo, Salantas*, *Salica*, *Salmarus*, *Salmana*, *Salmasa*, *Saliaco*, *Saliencia*, and so on.

[176] [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old_European_hydronymy]

Krahe, for some reason, omitted toponyms from the region of Greece and Asia Minor. So I will come here to expand and enrich the Old European toponymy of Krahe. For example, from Strabo's *Geography* we have:

From Italy: *Aithalia* (island of Elba), *Alix* (river), *Salernon* (Salerno), *Salapia*, *Kalenon*, *Kales*, *Kalatia*, *Kalasarna*, *Kallipolis*, *Akalandros* (river), *Kalatias*.

From Greece: *Oichalia*, *Alai*, *Aliartos*, *Aliartis* (lake), *Alos*, *Alious*, *Alonnesos* (island), *Alikyrna*, *Aigialos*, *Anchialos*, *Thessalonikeia*, *Salamina*, *Salmone*, *Salganeas*, *Kalavria* (island), *Kalliaros*, *Kallidromon, Kallas* (river), *Kalymna* (island), *Kalliste* (> Thera).

From Asia Minor: *Alys* (river Kisil-Irmak), *Salmydessos* (in Eastern Thrace), *Salona*, *Salmakis* (spring).

We also have *Kalagouris* in Iberia, *Salas* (probably the river Saale) in Germany. Let's not forget *Massalia* in France (Marseille).

Wikipedia also has a map of the area of ancient Caria, in which we find place names such as *Halicarnassa*, *Alabanda*, *Alinda*, *Kalynta*, and so on.

We observe a general theme of the form *kallas* or *salas*, which, on some occasions, evolves into *(h)alas*, and which also appears in the suffix *-a(l)los*. We also observe that the hydronyms of Krahe bear suffixes like those we examined previously, i.e. the suffixes *-mos/-ma* (Almos), *-nos/-na* (Almana), *-ros/-ra* (Salmarus), *-ndos/-nthos* (Alantia), *-sos/-sa* (Salmasa), *-kos* (Saliaco), and so on.

We can also consider variations in some place names, such as *Kalasarna* (instead of *Phalasarna*), *Kalliaros and Kalavria* in Greece (with the cognates *Cagliari* and *Calabria* in Italy), and so on. Also, *Alanta*, mentioned by Krahe from Western Europe, is cognate with *Atalante* in Greece.

Another observation we can make is about the toponyms *Calabria* and *Kallipolis*. Strabo himself tells us that the Thracians called *bria* the "city". If this is true, then "Kallipolis" does not mean "beautiful city" (from *kallos*= beauty), but "city by the sea" (from *kallas*= sea), where *polis*= city. The same will apply to other current place names in Greece, such as *Kalabryta*, *Kalarrytes*, *Kallithea*, etc., where the theme *kallas* generally expresses the presence of water.

However, there are many words in the Greek language with the same theme, such as *thalassa* (*θάλασσα*= sea), *alati* (*αλάτι*= salt), *almyra* (*αλμύρα*= saltness), *salos* (*σάλος*= turmoil), *salio* (*σάλιο*= saliva), *saligari* (*σαλιγκάρι*= snail), *solomos* (*σολωμός*= salmon), *kalami* (*καλάμι*= reed), *kalamari* (*καλαμάρι*= squid), etc. Possibly another theme *selas*, which appears in words such as *selachi* (*σελάχι*= ray), *selagizo* (*σελαγίζω*= to shine), *selene* (*σελήνη*= moon) etc., is of the same origin, with a slightly different meaning.

The theme *kallas* can also be associated with the Latin *aqua*, which can be found in the toponym *Akalandros*, or in another toponym mentioned by Strabo, with the variants *Quarios*/ *Koralios*/ *Kouralios*. Obviously words such as *akoros* (*άκορος*= a type of plant) or *koralli* (*κοράλλι*= coral) are of the same origin.

As far as the word *als* (*ἅλς*= sea or salt) is concerned, it is considered to be etymologically related to the IE root *sal-* (cf. Greek. *ali-*, Latin *sale*, Irish *sail*, Slavic *soli*, Armenian *at*/*alt*, Gothic *salt*, Tocharian A' *sale*, Tocharian B' *salyiye*, etc.).[177]

However, looking at the etymology of the *Galapagos* Islands, I found out that the name, which means "turtle", comes from the Paleo-Iberian word **calappacu*.[178] In other words, the theme *ka(l)las*/ *ca(l)las*/ *salas* is Paleo-European, in the sense that it must precede the arrival of the people of the Steppes.

[177] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%B1%CE%BB%CF%82]

[178] [https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/cal%C3%A0pet]

This should also lead us to review the origin of the IE languages. One could simply say that this word (*kallas* or *salas*) was adopted by the Indo-Europeans when they settled in Europe. However, the fact that it is etymologized in the IE languages indicates that this word had already existed in the PIE vocabulary, along with its variants, e.g. *als*/*alas* (*ἅλς*/*ἅλας*). In other words, part of the PIE vocabulary seems to be of Paleo-European/ Paleo-Anatolian origin. After all, this is the assumption I have already made about the Greek language- that when the first peoples of the Steppes arrived in Greece, the Greek language was already spoken.

The theme *palos*/*polis*

Another theme that appears in several toponyms is *polis* (*πόλις*= "city") with the, likely older, version *palos* (*πάλος*).

For example, from Strabo's *Geography*, we have:
From Iberia: *Ispalis* (Seville), *Polentia*, *Palma*.
From Celtiberia: *Pallantia.*
From Italy: *Palinouros* (cape), *Pola*, *Spoletion*, *Neapolis* (Naples), *Kallipolis*.
From Crimea: *Palakion* (fortress).
From Greece: *Astypalaia*, *Efpalion*, *Palaipharsalos*, *Paleis, Palairos*, *Polichne*, *Tetrapolis, Ekatompolis*, *Yampolis.* Also, we have the modern toponyms *Paloi* in Nisyros, *Katapola* in Amorgos, and so on.
From Macedonia: *Polyanon*, *Amphipolis*, *Kallipolis*, *Orthopolis*, *Philippoupolis*.
From Thrace: *Phinopolis.*
From Asia Minor: *Palaiskepsis*, *Palaia, Polion*/*Polisma*, *Polichna*, *Polymedeion*, *Ierapolis*.
From Cyprus: *Palaipaphos.*
From Phoenicia: *Palaityros*, *Palaistine.*

In the word *Kallipolis* we have the synthesis of the two themes *kallas* and *palos/polis*. It is possible that the word *polis* evolved from the word *palos*. This can be seen, for example, in place names such as *Efpalion*, where the name is also attested as *Efpolion*.[179]

[179] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eupalium]

As far as the etymology of the word *polis is* concerned, it is considered to derive from the IE root *pel-*, with an initial meaning "castle, fortress".[180]

However, the earlier form *palos* suggests another etymology, related to words such as *palaios* (*παλαιός*= old), *palai* (*πάλαι*= long ago), *polys*/*pollos* (*πολύς*/*πολλός*= many, the people, the crowd). This is why I included place names such as *Palaipaphos*, or *Polyanon*, where the initial prefix *palai-*, or *poly-*, respectively, may have the meaning of *polis* ("city"), not *palaios* (old) or *polys* ("many") in today's sense.

This is why a more likely etymology for the word *polis* is from *polys*/*pollos*. For example, we have the expression "χῶρος πλατὺς καὶ *πολλός* ἐστι" (the area is wide and vast).[181]

Of the same etymology are the words *pimbleimi*/*pletho* (*πίμπλημι*/*πλήθω*= to fill), *pleos*/*pleion* (*πλέος*/*πλείων*= more), *plethos* (*πλῆθος*= crowd), and are considered to come from the IE root *plē-*/*pelə₁-*/*pel-*, with the same meaning, "to fill".[182]

The word *palame* (*παλάμη*= palm) has a similar etymology, from the verb *plasso* (*πλάσσω*= to spread, to lay out), with cognate or similar words such as *palaste* (*παλαστή*), *palaistes* (*παλαιστής*), *palathe* (*παλάθη*), *plax* (*πλάξ*), *pelagos* (*πέλαγος*), *pelanos* (*πελανός*), etc.[183]

In other words, we see that toponyms such as *Palaipaphos* or *Palaityros* do not mean "old Paphos", or "old Tyre" (from *palaios*= old), but "city of Paphos", or "city of Tyre" (from *polis*/*palos*= city), as there have never been toponyms of the form **Neopaphos* or **Neotyros* (where *neos*= new). The same meaning can be given to the toponym *Pellana*/*Pellene* (> *Pallene*), with equivalent roots *pel-*/*pal-*.

[180] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CF%80%CF%8C%CE%BB%CE%B7]

[181] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CF%80%CF%8C%CE%BB%CE%B9%CF%82]

[182] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CF%80%CE%AF%CE%BC%CF%80%CE%BB%CE%B7%CE%BC%CE%B9]

[183] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CF%80%CE%BB%CE%AC%CF%83%CF%83%CF%89]

Before drawing our conclusions on the theme *palos* or *polis*, we should also consider the word *asty* (*άστυ*), which has the same meaning ("city"), and which is found in place names such as *Astypalaia*. It is considered that the word *asty* is mainly associated with the concept of a fortified city. In ancient times the word specifically referred to the physical urban core of a city, as opposed to the suburbs or the countryside. The type *asty* corresponds to the Sanskrit *rāstu* "place of residence", probably the Messapian *vastei*, or the Tocharic *wast*/*ost* "house", forms that go back to the IE root *u̯es*- "to stay, to dwell".[184]

In all likelihood, the word *asty* is subsequent, and could be a word that came to Greece with the peoples of the Steppes. This word, however, did not prevail in the modern Greek language, nor in place names (*Astypalea* is an exception, in contrast to many other place names that contain the theme *palos* or *polis*), nor in common words, with the exception of some compound ones, such as *astynomos* (*αστυνόμος*= policeman), or in the expression *kleinon asty* (*κλεινόν άστυ*= "famous city", for Athens.

So we return to the prior and most prevalent theme *palos*/*polis*. How far can we go back in time to find the origin of this theme? Probably we can go as far back as *Poliochne* in Lemnos, which contains the theme, and which was built at the beginning of the Neolithic period for the Aegean, in the middle of the 5th millennium BC. From the stage of Poliochne I (3700-3200 BC), we have the first traces of early urban development with defensive walls.[185]

We also have, however, *Palma* and *Polentia* (Pollensa), cities which are located in present-day Mallorca, but which Strabo lists in his *Geography*. This reference is important because it helps us unify the themes *kallas* (and the variant *alma/ala* cited by Krahe) and *palos*/*polis*. In other words, we have *Alma* and *Alentia* from Krahe's hydronyms, to complement *Palma* and *Polentia* from Strabo's toponyms. The theme *palos* can therefore be as old as the theme *kallas*, i.e. of Paleo-European origin, as we saw earlier for the word **calappacu*.

[184] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%E1%BC%84%CF%83%CF%84%CF%85]

[185] [https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%A0%CE%BF%CE%BB%CE%B9%CF%8C%CF%87%CE%BD%CE%B7]

The theme *arna*

I include this theme because it is found in many place names, such as *Phalasarna* or *Lerna*, or even in place names called *Arna*. Such place names are usually found in locations with water. However, the root *ar-* (*αρ-*) is as much related to water, e.g. *aryo* (*ἀρύω*= to draw water), *ardo* (*ἄρδω*= to water), as to the earth, e.g. *aroo* (*ἀρόω*= to plough), *aroura* (*ἄρουρα*= land), etc.

Regarding toponyms that contain the theme *arna*, from Strabo's *Geography* we have:
Italy: *Arnos*, *Narnia* (Narni), *Sarnos*, *Kalasarna.*
Macedonia: *Barnous*.
Greece: *Arne* (ancient name of Chaeronea), *Acarnania* (region), *Phalasarna.*
Asia: *Pharnakia*, *Sarnios, Alisarna, Karnos, Karna*/*Karnana.*

If *Kalasarna* is the correct type while *Phalasarna* is a corruption, then the etymology of Phalasarna given before is partly correct. It is interesting, however, that the word *Kalasarna* contains both themes, *ka(l)las* (which denotes the presence of water) and *arna* (with the meaning of fertile land). The same is true for *Alisarna* (*alas* + *arna*).

We have also seen, with reference to *Qurna*, place names such as *Karna* (Poland), *Kärna* (Sweden), *Karnal* (India), *Karnak* (Egypt), and so on.

The list of place names with the theme *arna*, however, does not end here. From the English entry of *Wikipedia* we have:

Arna in Norway. *Arna* in Italy (now Civitella). *Arna* in ancient Lycia, the city of Xanthos.[186]

From the Greek *Wikipedia* entry we have:

[186] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arna]

Arna in Laconia. *Arne* in Andros (also *Arnas*). *Arne*, an ancient city of Thessaly. *Arnaia* in Halkidiki. Also, *Arne* as a mythical person, mother of Aeolus.[187]

We also have *Arnissa* in Macedonia. The city was called *Ostrovo* by Slavs who had settled in the area. However, the word *ostrovo* means "island", and it is related to locations found near water,[188] as the theme *arna* in *Arnissa* implies.

There is also the well-known expression "της *άρναϛ* το νερό" ("the water of *arna*"), in the sense of oblivion, where *arna* was a spring in Hades.[189]

Also, anagrammatizing the word *arna,* we take the hypothetical word **naar* (*νάαρ*), from which the modern Greek words *nero* (*νερό*= water) and *nearos* (*νεαρόϛ*= young) arise.

In toponyms such as *Sarnios*/*Arnos* we have the variant *sar-*/*ar-*, as we saw before for the root *sal-*/*al-*. We also have the variant *kar-*/*ar-* in the toponyms *Karna*/*Arna*, or we may even compare the roots *kar-*/*kal-* in place names such as *Karnos*/*Kallas*.

Krahe, whose hydronyms we saw above, linked the etymology of the *Arno* river with the PIE root *er-*, "to flow, to move".[190]

187

[https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%86%CF%81%CE%BD%CE%B7#:~:text=%CE%A4%CE%BF%20%CF%8C%CE%BD%CE%BF%CE%BC%CE%B1%20%CE%86%CF%81%CE%BD%CE%B7%20%CE%BC%CF%80%CE%BF%CF%81%CE%B5%CE%AF%20%CE%BD%CE%B1,%CF%89%CF%82%20%CE%91%CF%81%CE%BD%CE%B1%CE%AF%2C%20%CF%83%CF%84%CE%BF%CE%BD%20%CF%80%CE%BB%CE%B7%CE%B8%CF%85%CE%BD%CF%84%CE%B9%CE%BA%CF%8C%20%CE%B1%CF%81%CE%B9%CE%B8%CE%BC%CF%8C)]

188

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ostrovo,_Veliko_Gradi%C5%A1te#:~:text=Ostrovo%20(meaning%20%22island%22%20in,a%20population%20of%20300%20people.]

189 [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%AC%CF%81%CE%BD%CE%B1]

190 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arno]

A similar etymology can be given to the toponym *Arñna* (the ancient Greek city of Xanthos),[191] if we recall the etymology of *Lerna* (prefix *Le-* + *arinna*/*arna*= spring). The fact that the name has been given a Hattian origin is indicative that the origin of the theme *arna* is probably Neolithic. But if the root *ar-* has IE etymology, then at least part of the vocabulary of the IE languages will be of the same, Neolithic, origin.

The same is true for the root *ar-* with the meaning of arable land. For example, the verb *aroo*/*aro* (*ἀρόω*/*ἀρῶ*= to plough) is etymologized from the IE root *h₂erh₃-*, with variations such as the medieval Irish *airim*, Gothic *arzan*, Lithuanian *ariu*, or the ancient Slavic *orjo*.[192]

I imagine that the words *ergazomai* (*ἐργάζομαι*= I work) and *ergon* (*ἔργον*= work) are of the same origin. There is even the unit of measurement *are*.[193] However, the origin of the root *ar-* cannot be attributed to the peoples of the Steppes, who initially had no idea about the cultivation of the land, unless of course this root passed into their vocabulary during the Neolithic period, that is, when the cultivation of the land began further to the south.

It is also characteristic that the word *aroura* is used by Herodotus to denote an agricultural unit of measurement in Egypt.[194] Let us also mention the cognate *Aruru*, a Mesopotamian deity related to vegetation,[195] or *Arura*, a village in present-day Palestine.[196] In other words, it seems that the word *aroura* passed into the Greek vocabulary as a loan from the Semitic languages. But if the root *ar-* had existed since the beginning of the Neolithic period, then it is most likely that neither the Indo-European nor the Semitic languages would have yet been formed.

We see that toponyms bearing the themes *karna* or *arna* are widespread throughout Europe, Asia Minor, India, Egypt, Syria and Arabia. The same is true for the toponym *Qurna* we saw before.

---

[191] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xanthos]

[192] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%E1%BC%80%CF%81%CF%8C%CF%89]

[193] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Are]

[194] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%E1%BC%84%CF%81%CE%BF%CF%85%CF%81%CE%B1]

[195] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aruru_(goddess)]

[196] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arura]

Obviously, looking for an IE etymology for *Qurna* does not make any sense for such a wide distribution of the theme, in areas that are not related to Indo-Europeans. In other words, we have to accept that themes such as *karna*/*arna*, *palos/polis*, or *ka(l)las/salas*, must belong to a substratum of languages that preceded the arrival of the people of the Steppes.

However, this substratum survived and evolved into the Greek language, giving a large number of words, with roots such as *αλ-* (*άλς*, *άλας*), *παλ-* (*πάλος/πόλις*), *πελ-* (*πέλαγος*), *αρ-* (*άρω*, *άρουρα*, *Άργος*, *αγρός*), *αρδ-* (*άρδω*, *άρδευση*), and so on. We will see below that the root *ar-*, in the sense of arable land, reaches as far back as *Argissa*, which was first inhabited at the beginning of the Neolithic period.

Chronological succession of themes and suffixes

In the case of toponyms that we saw earlier with the suffix *-nthos*, a characteristic of this suffix is that it is the final suffix of the names. The toponyms *Probalinthos* or *Prepesinthos*, which are mentioned in Strabo's *Geography*, for example, may have a successive series of suffixes: *Proba-li-nthos/ Prepe-si-nthos*. The suffixes *-li* (e.g. *Delion*, *Omolion*, *Skollion*), or *-si* (e.g. *Aipasion*, *Kikysion*, *Eilesion*, *Tilphousion*), are not uncommon in place names. However, we will not find toponyms of the form *Proba-nth-li(-os)* or *Prepe-nth-si(-os).*

This may suggest that people who used the *-nthos* suffix came after the people who used the *-li* or *-si* suffixes. However, we can also find counterexamples, such as the word *kantharos* (*κάνθαρος*= beetle), where another suffix, *-ros*/*-aros*, follows the *-nth-* cluster.

Something similar applies to the toponym *Pyrasos/Pyrassos*, where the suffix *-(s)sos* follows the suffix *-ra*. The toponym *Pyrra* is attested, so one could assume that people who used the suffix *-sos* added this suffix to a toponym that was previously called *Pyrra*. Again, however, there are counterexamples, such as the toponym *Me(s)sara*, where a suffix *-ra* was added to a name ending in *-ssa* (*Messa*, is a place name also attested).

We can make similar reasoning with toponyms that we have already encountered, such as *Kalasarna, Alisarna*, *Astypalaia*, and so on. Regarding the themes *arna*/*palos*/*asty* (with the meaning of "inhabited place", or "city"), the last two themes are combined in *Astypalaia*. *Kalasarna* and *Alisarna* combine the themes *(k)alas* and *arna*. On the other hand, place names of the type **Arnapolis* or **Palaiarna* are not attested. However, as we saw above, the theme *arna* (especially the root *ar*-) has left so many words in the Greek vocabulary (e.g. *aryo*, *aroo*, *Argos*, *agros*, etc.), so that it must be considered as Greek as the themes *kallas* and *palos* in *Kallipolis*. In other words, since toponyms such as *Kalasarna* and *Phalasarna* are already attested, we should not be surprised if we found a toponym **Palasarna*.

In any case, if we try to place the themes *arna*/*palos*/*asty* in chronological order, we may have *arna*> *palos*> *asty*, so that the theme *arna* may have come to Greece with the first Neolithic farmers who exploited arable land, in the 7th millennium BC, the theme *palos*/*polis* may have appeared with the establishment of the first urban centers, in the second half of the 4th millennium BC (regarding the foundation of *Poliochne* as a milestone), and the theme *asty* may have been first used in Mycenaean times, with the testimony of the word in Linear B inscriptions as *wa-tu*, in the second half of the 2nd millennium BC. The same words, however, could have been used with different meanings in different periods.

One may consider many such correlations, for example by comparing the following triplets of words, *ornis*/ *ptenon*/ *pouli*, *louloudi*/ *anthos*/ *phloros*, or *erebinthos*/ *orobos*/ *rebithi* (*όρνις*/ *πτηνόν*/ *πουλί*, *λουλούδι*/ *άνθος*/ *φλώρος*, *ερέβινθος*/ *όροβος*/ *ρεβίθι*).

For the first triplet (*ornis*/ *ptenon*/ *pouli*), the word *pouli* is posterior, from the Latin *pullus* (= young animal), but the word is probably associated with the ancient Greek word *polos* (*πῶλος*), with the same meaning. As far as the first two words (*ornis*/*ptenon*) are concerned, while the first of them (*ὄρνις*) seems to be older (the form *ornitha* even resembles words with the suffix -*nthos*/-*ntha*), both words have a Greek etymology, i.e. from the verbs *ornymi* (*ὄρνυμι*= to rouse), and *petomai* (*πέτομαι*= to fly), respectively.

For the second triplet (*louloudi*/ *anthos*/ *phloros)*, although the last word is the "proper" IE word (i.e. according to the Italian *fiore*, or the English *flower*), in the modern Greek language it is used with a different, even negative, meaning. As far as the first two words (*louloudi* and *anthos*) are concerned, the first one is considered to be derived from the words *leirion* or **lilion* (according to the Latin *lilium* or the Albanian *lule*). This word is considered to be of unknown etymology, i.e. it belongs to the wider Pelasgian substratum of the Eastern Mediterranean. The same applies to the second word (*anthos*), which in fact contains the characteristic cluster -*nth*-. For this word an IE etymology has been given, from the PIE root *h₂éndhos*,[197] but this etymology is uncertain.

As far as the last triplet (*erebinthos*/*orobos*/*rebithi)* is concerned, it is essentially the same word with different variations. The word *erebinthos* (also found as *lebinthos*) is considered "suspicious" because it contains the "Pre-Greek" cluster -*nth*-. However, from the intermediate form *orobos* we get the verb *erepto* (*ἐρέπτω*= to cover, to pull to cut a flower),[198] so that *erebinthos*, or *rebithi* (*ρεβίθι*= "chickpea") in modern Greek, loses its mysterious, "pre-Greek", character.

All these examples show that the best approach is to consider the corresponding place names, themes and suffixes, and all the words produced by these themes, as equivalent and characteristic of the Greek language. After all, the high degree of interchangeability of themes and suffixes of place names and common words is an indication of both the richness and the antiquity of the same language.

Analysis of toponyms

I have already mentioned some toponyms with their possible etymology, such as *Korinthos*, *Larymna*, *Lerna*, *Phalasarna*, and so on. Here I will mention some additional toponyms of "strategic importance", which have been inhabited since the prehistoric period, while their names can have meaning in the Greek language. It is also characteristic of most of these cities or places

[197] [https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/%E1%BC%84%CE%BD%CE%B8%CE%BF%CF%82#Ancient_Greek]

[198] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%E1%BC%90%CF%81%CE%AD%CF%80%CF%84%CF%89]

that they were inhabited continuously, up to the period when the Greek language was testified. I list the place names in alphabetical order.

Argissa

Argissa of Thessaly is also listed as *Argoura* or *Argoussa*. There is also *Argithea* in Thessaly and Attica.

Argissa, which is located near Larissa, is thought to have been continuously inhabited from the 7th millennium BC up to the Late Bronze Age, with the lowest layers of habitation dating back to the beginning of the 7th millennium BC, in parallel to Sesklo and Knossos. The radiocarbon evidence and the typology of the tools suggest that the first settlers arrived shortly after the beginning of agriculture in Western Anatolia.[199]

Argissa is of key importance in our analysis because it contains a Greek root *ar-*, hence *argos*/*agros*, meaning "plane, field". If this is true, then the suffix *-issa* will be equally Greek. In other words, we have the root of a Greek word *agros* (*αγρός*), along with all its derivatives, e.g. *aroura*, *arotro*, *aroo*, *arouraios* (*άρουρα*, *άροτρο*, *αρόω*, *αρουραίος*), etc., from the beginning of the Neolithic period.

Argos

Argos in the Peloponnese contains the same root (*ar-*) as Argissa we just mentioned. The city is considered to have been continuously inhabited since the 5th millennium BC. The etymology of the word *Argos* is considered to be related either to the word *argos* (*ἀργός*= white, shiny), or to the word *agros* (*ἀγρός*= field). Strabo accepts the latter etymology.[200]

I also accept Strabo's view, as it is obvious that the word *argos* has the meaning of "field", "land", or "plain", since the word *aroura*, as we have already mentioned, and which is quoted in the

[199] [https://neolithicarch.com/argissa-magoula-is-one-of-the-most-important-neolithic-sites-in-thessaly/]

[200] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Argos,_Peloponnese]

Mycenaean texts with the meaning of "arable land", is also attested in the Egyptian texts as a unit of surface measurement, from the time of the Old Kingdom (3rd millennium BC).

In other words, the first farmers, who, as it is believed, came to Greece from Anatolia, used the same word for arable land as the farmers who settled in Egypt. We can thus follow the course of a word (*argos*/*agros*), from *Argissa* in Thessaly (and the "Pelasgian Argos"), to *Argos* in the Peloponnese (and the "Greek Argos"), long before any "Indo-Europeans" appeared.

Gortyna

"After Knossos, the city of Gortyna seems to have held the second place in order and power. For when these cities acted in concert, they subdued all the rest of the inhabitants, and when they were divided, there was discord throughout the island (of Crete); and whichever city Kydonia annexed was for them the most important achievement", testifies Strabo.[201]

As far as Gortyna of Crete is concerned, we have already seen that a city with the same name existed in Arcadia. Gortyna of Crete has been inhabited since the 3rd millennium BC. If Gortyna of Arcadia is the mother city, then the latter will be even older. We have also seen that from the type *Karytaina* (*Καρύταινα*, a town located near Arcadian Gortyna), we can etymologize *Gortyna* as "walnut-tree". The word we can reconstruct is **gortyn/*gortyns* (**γόρτυν/*γόρτυνς*), from which the ancient Greek word *karyon* (*κάρυον*), or the modern Greek word *karydi* (*καρύδι*), "walnut", evolved. Also of interest is the evolution of the suffix from the initial form *-y(n)na*, to the later form *-aina*. These conversions from the older "Pelasgian" type to the newer "Greek" type are done smoothly, without the need to suggest language replacement.

Eleftherna

I include *Eleftherna* in my analysis because of the importance of the name of this city. From this name and the Pelasgian goddess *Eileithyia* comes the word *eleftheria* (*ελευθερία*= freedom).

[201] Strabo, *Geographica* (10, 4, 11).

Although the wider area of ancient Eleftherna would have been inhabited since at least the Minoan period, this city is thought to have been founded by the Dorians in the 9th century BC. According to the lexicographer Stephanus of Byzantium, the original name of the city was *Satra* (probably derived from the archaic forms *Satara* or *Satyra* (with the variations *Saoros* or *Aoros*), and was then renamed *Apollonia*, after the patron god of the city Apollo, who also bore the nickname Apollo *Eleftherios*, and the name *Eleftherna* finally prevailed. According to another version, *Eleftherna* comes from the nickname of the goddess Demeter *Eleftho*.[202]

By the way, I found a city *Satara* in India,[203] which is cognate with the most likely Minoan name *Satara*. In the Marathi language, *satara* means "seven gates". The name is derived from the Sanskrit words *sapta* (seven) and *dhara* (door).[204] If, incidentally, the older name of *Eleftherna* (< *Satara*) has the same or similar etymology, this would mean that the language of the Minoans was of IE origin.

Apart from this, the later name *Eleftherna* must have existed before the arrival of the Dorians in the region during the 1st millennium BC, but, in all likelihood, the Dorians already used toponyms of this type. Besides, we have the toponym *Eleftherai* (*Ἐλευθεραὶ*) from Strabo's *Geography*. That is, the earlier form *Eleftherna* evolved into the later form *Eleftherai.*

As far as the root of the toponym is concerned, it comes from the ancient Greek verb *eleftho/ erchomai* (*ἐλεύθω/ ἔρχομαι*= to come),[205] from which the word *eleftheros* (*ἐλεύθερος*= free)

---

202 [https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%91%CF%81%CF%87%CE%B1%CE%AF%CE%B1_%CE%95%CE%BB%CE%B5%CF%8D%CE%B8%CE%B5%CF%81%CE%BD%CE%B1]

203 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Satara_(city)]

204 [https://www.wisdomlib.org/cities/satara-3508]

205 [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%E1%BC%90%CE%BB%CE%B5%CF%8D%CF%83%CE%BF%CE%BC%CE%B1%CE%B9]

derives. For the last word, an etymology is given by the PIE root *h₁lewdh-* (to develop, the people, the tribe). The Latin *liber* is considered to be a cognate word.[206]

From this last word, however, come the modern English words *liberation*, or *labor*. In other words, the meaning of the verb *eleftho/ erchomai* is deeper, having initially the meaning of "to be born" or "to be redeemed".

As far as the surnames of Apollo *Eleftherios* or of Demeter *Eleftho* are concerned, they refer to the Pelasgian deity *Eileithyia*. Her name is found in various alternatives, such as *Eileithyia*, *Elefthyia*, *Elysia*, or *Eleftho* (*Εἰλείθυια*, *Ἐλεύθυια*, *Ἔλυσία*, *Ἐλευθώ*). Eileithyia was the Greek goddess of childbirth. According to *Wikipedia*, in the cave of Amnissos in Crete, the goddess was associated with the annual birth of the divine child, and her worship is associated with Enesidaon, who was the chthonic aspect of the god Poseidon. It is possible that her cult is related to the cult of *Elefsis*. The earliest attested form of the name is the Mycenaean *e-re-u-ti-ja*, which is found on the Linear B tablets.[207]

Obviously, the toponym *Elefsis/Eleusis* (*Ἐλευσίς*) is of the same origin, from *elefsis*/*eleusis* (*ἔλευσις*= arrival). As far as the name *Eileithyia* is concerned, most scholars consider it to be pre-Greek. However, the name may derive from the perfect participle *elelythyia* (*ἐληλυθυῖα*= "she who has delivered"), of the same verb *eleftho* (*ἐλεύθω*). But if modern Greek words such as *erchomai, elefsis, eleftheria* (*έρχομαι*, *έλευσις*, *ελευθερία*) are of "pre-Greek" origin, then there is nothing left in the Greek language to be of "Greek" origin. Even the word "origin" ("προέλευση") is of the same *origin* (προ- *έλευση*).

206

[https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/%E1%BC%90%CE%BB%CE%B5%CF%8D%CE%B8%CE%B5%CF%81%CE%BF%CF%82#Ancient_Greek]

207 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eileithyia]

Eftresis

Eftresis, or Eutresis, is an important place name because of its Greek name, and because the city's archaeological horizon inaugurates the Early Bronze Age in Greece (3200 BC). This horizon is considered to have evolved directly from the earlier Neolithic horizon of Central and South Greece.[208]

The city also seems to have been continuously inhabited until the end of the Mycenaean period (1200 BC). If this is true, then the name of the city may be as old as the city itself.

As far as the etymology of the name is concerned, it comes from the words *eu/ef* (*εὖ*), which expresses good quality,[209] and *tresis* (*τρῆσις*= opening, perforation),[210] apparently offering a description of the landscape where the site is located.

The significant point is that if the name *Eftresis* has been preserved from the time the city was founded, then the Greek language would have been substantially evolved as early as the Early Bronze Age.

Ierapytna

According to *Wikipedia*, the foundation of the city lies in mythical times, when it was founded by the Korybantes, who came to Ierapytna from Rhodes, hence the name *Kameiros*, which was an ancient Rhodian city. Earlier names of Ierapytna were *Kyrba* (after its first settler who had the same name), *Kameiros*, or *Pytna* (= hilltop). The site of ancient Ierapytna was one kilometer away from the current city, in southeastern Crete.[211]

---

[208] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eutresis_culture]

[209] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%B5%E1%BD%96]

[210] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CF%84%CF%81%E1%BF%86%CF%83%CE%B9%CF%82]

[211] [https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%99%CE%B5%CF%81%CE%AC%CF%80%CE%B5%CF%84%CF%81%CE%B1]

Today's name *Ierapetra* of the city implies that the earlier form *Ierapytna* is etymologized as "sacred stone" (*Ιεράπετρα= ιερός* (sacred) + *πέτρα* (stone)), hence the interpretation that *pytna* means "stone", or "rock". However, it is not certain whether the first component of the word meant "sacred", or whether it is a corruption of another word in the local dialect.

The name *Kyrba* is reminiscent of the *Korybantes*, which are related to ancient Phrygia. The name *Kameiros* is reminiscent of the word *kamillos*, which we will see below with respect to Cadmus, and is related to the region of ancient Lycia. The word *pytna* can be considered Pelasgian. These three names (*Kyrba*, *Kameiros*, *Pytna*) may imply three different populations on the island at three different periods, or simply three alternative names for the city, with three different or similar meanings.

However, the word *pytna* (*πύτνα*) is reminiscent of the Greek word *potnia* (*πότνια*), which is also attested in Mycenaean inscriptions, and which is used for deities, with the meaning of "dear, beloved". A similar modern Greek word is *despoina* (*δέσποινα*). In Mycenaean texts, too, the word is attested with the variant *pi-pi-tu-na*, which has been rendered as *Piptynna*.[212] There is still the name *Putana*, a deity of Indian mythology.[213] It seems therefore that the name is not limited to the region of Crete, but possibly reaches as far as India.

Thus, the word *pytna* can be associated with a deity, just as today in Greece when we say "prophet Elijah" we do not mean "hilltop", but the "monastery (of prophet Elijah) located at the hilltop".

---

212 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Mycenaean_deities#:~:text=Pipituna%2C%20%F0%90%80%A0%F0%90%80%A0%F0%90%80%B6%F0%90%80%99%2C%20pi%2Dpi%2Dtu%2Dna%2C%20Reconstructed%20as%20*%CE%A0%CE%AF%CF%80%CF%84%CF%85%CE%BD%CE%BD%CE%B1%20(P%C3%ADptynna);,deity%2C%20considered%20to%20be%20Pre%2DGreek%20or%20Minoan.]

213 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Putana#:~:text=7%20References-,Etymology,a%20symptom%20of%20chicken%20pox.]

Pydna, an ancient city in Macedonia, is also associated with the type *Pytna*. Here we can see the correspondence between the suffixes *-tna* and *-dna*. The name *Pydna* may also be related to the word *pyndax* (*πύνδαξ*= bottom).[214]

In any case, if we accept the connection between the words *pytna* and *potnia*, then the word *pytna* has an IE etymology, from *posis*/*potis* (*πόσις*/*πότις*= husband), and corresponds to the Sanskrit *patni* (lady, goddess), the Lithuanian *viespatni* (lady of the house), or the Latin *potis*/*potens* (capable/strong).[215] Also, in the Greek language, apart from *despoina* ("lady of the house"), we also have the word *despotes* (*δεσπότης*= master, lord). In other words, the name *Ierapytna*, in one form or another, survived in today's IE languages.

Lerna

Although we have already said many things about Lerna, it is worth mentioning it again because of its importance in Greek prehistory, and because the name *Lerna* has been considered pre-Greek. Although Lerna has been inhabited since the 6th millennium BC, its famous House of the Tiles was destroyed in 2200 BC, and was not rebuilt. According to *Wikipedia*, the nature of the destruction was initially attributed to an invasion of Greeks and/or Indo-Europeans during this period. However, this view is no longer maintained, given the lack of uniformity in the destruction of the sites of the same period, and the presence of continuity in settlements of the period, such as Lithares, Flious, Manika , etc.[216]

As far as the name *Lerna* is concerned, the Hattic hypothesis, i.e. that the name comes from the Hattic words *Le* (as a prefix) and *arinna* ("spring"), is not necessarily true, as the prefix *Le* is found in a number of Greek words and place names, while the theme *arna/ arinna* is related to the root *ar-*, which is also attested in a multitude of Greek words (*aro*, *ardevo*, *argos*/*agros*, and so on), while the same theme appears unchanged as a place name *Arna* or *Arne*.

[214] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CF%80%CF%8D%CE%BD%CE%B4%CE%B1%CE%BE]

[215] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CF%80%CF%8C%CF%84%CE%BD%CE%B9%CE%B1]

[216] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helladic_chronology]

As for the thematic syllable *Le*, according to the *Perseus Digital Library*, there are around 700 Greek words that begin with this syllable.[217] For example, *leos*> *leios* (*λέος*> *λείος*= smooth), *leporis*> *lagos* (*λέπορις*> *λαγός*= hare), *lepos*> *lepi* (*λέπος*> *λέπι*= scale), *lexis*> *lexe* (*λέξις*> *λέξη*= word), *legos*> *lagnos* (*λέγος*> *λάγνος*= lustful), *leia* (*λεία*= loot), *leelasia* (*λεηλασία*= looting), *leibo*> *aleipho* (*λείβω*> *αλείφω*= to spread, to rub), etc.

All these words have been preserved in the modern Greek language, and if there were no dictionaries that testify to their etymology, we would say that they are "strange" pre-Greek words. But, finally, this is not the case.

Oloura

I mention here a typical example of a place name that may be associated with the Dorians. Strabo mentions the area of *Olouris*/*Oloura* (*Ὄλουρις*/*Ὄλουρα*), and says that the former name of the area was *Dorion* (*Δώριον*). It was located in the area of Malthi in present-day Messenia, with the first traces of habitation going back at least to the middle of the 3rd millennium BC.[218]

A characteristic of this coincidence in the name is that we can directly connect the two names *Oloura* and *Dorion*, with an intermediate form **Doloura*, from which the apparently later form (although Strabo considers it to be earlier) *Dorion* derives.

As far as the common word *olyra* (*ὄλυρα*) is concerned, it is a variety of wheat (commonly known as wild wheat), which was widespread in Europe during the Bronze Age, while the first archaeological data about the plant's cultivation date back to the 5th millennium BC, in the Black Sea region.[219]

---

[217] [https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/resolveform?type=start&lookup=Le&lang=greek]

[218] [https://www.sia.gr/en/sx_PrintPage.php?tid=319#:~:text=Work%20began%20in%201926%20as,the%20site%20and%20its%20chronology.]

[219] [https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%8C%CE%BB%CF%85%CF%81%CE%B1#:~:text=%CE%97%20%CF%8C%

In addition to *Oloura,* we also have *Dorylaion* (*Δορύλαιον*) in Northwest Asia Minor. Dorylaion is believed to have been founded in 1000 BC by the Phrygians, and that the name comes from the mythical hero *Dorylaos*, a descendant of Hercules. However, the oldest layers of Dorylaion date back to the 3rd millennium BC.[220]

Thus, *Oloura*, with the possible earlier form **Doloura*, bear witness to a clearly earlier origin of the name *Dorion*. In fact, judging from the morphology of the words *Oloura* or *olyra*, according to *olynthos* (*ὄλυνθος*= wild fig), and so on, we can call them Pelasgian.

I consider the case of language replacement (that the Dorians brought the Greek language to the area, and that they simply borrowed the earlier name of the site) unlikely, as the name *Dorieus* is attested in Mycenaean texts from the 2nd millennium BC, while there is no indication of abandonment or interruption in the archaeological layers of the area of Dorion, at least from the middle of the 3rd millennium BC onwards.

In other words, whatever the connection of the Dorians with Dorylaion in Asia Minor may be, it seems that the Dorians descended from the Pelasgian inhabitants of *Oloura* (**Doloura*), before the area was renamed *Dorion*, and the **Dolourians* became the *Dorians*.

Similar reasoning can be made about other place names that have survived thanks to Strabo. For example, *Ephyra* (*Ἐφύρα*) of Thesprotia, whose former name was *Kichyra* (*Κίχυρα*).[221] In other words, we have *Kichyra> Ephyra> Epeiros* (*Ήπειρος= Epirus*).

CE%BB%CF%85%CF%81%CE%B1%20%CE%AE%20%CE%B1%CE%B3%CF%81%CE%B9%CE%BF%CF%83%CE%AF%CF%84%CE%B1%CF%81%CE%BF%20%CE%AE,spelta.]

[220] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dorylaeum]

[221]

[https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%95%CF%86%CF%8D%CF%81%CE%B1_%CE%98%CE%B5%CF%83%CF%80%CF%81%CF%89%CF%84%CE%AF%CE%B1%CF%82]

Another place name mentioned by Strabo is *Eiona* (*Ἠιόνα*) which was an ancient Thracian city of the *Edonoi* (*Ηδωνοί*).[222] Another city with the same name in Argolis is said to have been founded by Pelasgian Dryopes.[223] Of course, we observe the coincidence between the names *Eiona* or *Edonoi*, and the *Ionians* (the later attested Greek tribe).

Are all these Pelasgian tribes Pre-Greeks, or did some of them constitute the Proto-Greeks? Perhaps the information we have at our disposal at the moment is not enough to reach a definitive conclusion. But as we will see below, when we talk about the Mycenaeans, even the most well-known Greek tribes, the Achaeans, the Danaans and the Argives, that is, tribes that date back to the Mycenaean period, may not have been the first Greeks, and some of them may not even have spoken Greek when they settled in Greece. This is why I have expressed the opinion that the Greek language was already spoken in Greece long before the appearance of the Mycenaean civilization.

Parnassos

I mention *Parnassos* because a theory was formed around this name by L. R. Palmer, according to which this specific mountain was settled by Luwian migrants during the 2nd millennium BC. This theory is based on the Luwian word *parna*, which means "mountain" or "temple".[224]

However, the appearance of the same root, *parn*-, in two other mountains in Greece, *Parnitha* in Attica, and *Parnon* in the Peloponnese, shows that this root is clearly more widespread. In other words, if during the 2nd millennium BC a Luwian population had such a large distribution in Greece, then the subsequent language in Greece should be Luwian, not Greek.

It is therefore more correct to assume that this theme pre-existed in the wider region of the Eastern Mediterranean, and that the peoples who lived in this area used the same theme, with any variations (e.g. *Parnassa* in Asia Minor, ending in -*ssa*, and *Parnassos* in Greece, ending in -*sos*). In any

[222] [https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%97%CE%B9%CF%8E%CE%BD]

[223] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eion_(disambiguation)]

[224] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mount_Parnassus]

case, the theme *parna* may be just as old as the theme *arna*, which we saw previously, i.e. dating back to the Neolithic period.

As far as the etymology of *Parnassos* is concerned, the only word I found with a similar theme is *parnops* (*πάρνοψ*= locust).[225] The word has an uncertain etymology, but if we consider that the root of the word, *parn*-, may be related to the appearance of the insect (the suffix -*ops* has the meaning of "to look like"), then this theme may mean "green". If this etymology is true, then "Parnassos" means "green" (mountain). Transpositions or anagrams of the form **parnisos*/ *prasinos* (**πάρνισος*/ *πράσινος*) are not improbable in the Greek language (in modern Greek *prasinos* means "green").

Poliochne

Poliochne is important because it is probably the oldest city in the Aegean and in the whole of Europe, founded even before Troy was built. Although traces of habitation exist as early as the middle of the 5th millennium BC, the settlement seems to have developed into a city from the beginning of the Bronze Age (3200 BC). Besides its Treasury, a megaron and a "bouleuterion" have been found in the city, which was finally abandoned at the end of the Bronze Age (1200 BC).[226]

Although the name *Poliochne* is limited to Lemnos, there are many place names with the name *Polichne* from ancient Greece (in Chios, Crete, Megarida, Messenia, Naxos), and from Asia Minor (in ancient Ionia, and in Troas).[227] There is still a village *Polichna* in Poland.[228]

All these place names contain the theme *polis*, which we have already referred to. It seems that this theme spread rapidly with the appearance of the first cities in the Eastern Mediterranean from

[225] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CF%80%CE%AC%CF%81%CE%BD%CE%BF%CF%88]

[226] [http://odysseus.culture.gr/h/3/eh351.jsp?obj_id=2534#:~:text=In%20the%20subsequent%20Red%20Period,end%20of%20the%20third%20millennium.]

[227] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polichne]

[228] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polichna]

the end of the 4th millennium BC. Bronze trade, which began in this period, would have contributed significantly to the flourishing of these regions.

As far as the etymology of the word *polis* is concerned, it is associated, as we have already said, with the word *polys*/*pollos* (*πολύς*/*πολλός*), meaning "gathered crowd". There are also cognate themes in other languages, such as Sanskrit *pura*, or Lithuanian *pillis*.[229] The word may even have the meaning of "fortress". However, I consider it unlikely that the origin of the word is from the Pontic Steppes. On the contrary, it is more likely to trace the origin of the word to the area where the first city, *Poliochne*, appears, at least from the end of the 4th millennium BC. But in that case, we should also reassess the origins of the IE languages.

Saliagos

This is a small island north of Antiparos. Its importance lies in the fact that it is one of the oldest sites with traces of habitation on a Greek island, from the 5th millennium BC.[230] Three Early Cycladic marble figurines were also found on the island. It seems that the Cycladic civilization began much earlier than previously believed.

Characteristic is the name *Saliagos*, which contains the root *sal*-, which we saw above examining the theme *ka(l)las*/*salas*, with the meaning of "sea". Krahe, who collected toponyms with the root *sal*- from the region of Northern and Western Europe, traced these toponyms to the 2nd millennium BC. However, here we see that the same theme can be found in the Aegean since the Neolithic period.

Phylakope

Phylakope is of strategic importance in our analysis because the name is clearly Pelasgian Greek, and because the site was continuously inhabited, from the foundation of the city, middle of the 3rd millennium BC, until the end of the Mycenaean period (1200 BC).[231]

[229] [https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/%CF%80%CF%8C%CE%BB%CE%B9%CF%82]

[230] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saliagos]

[231] [https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%A6%CF%85%CE%BB%CE%B1%CE%BA%CF%89%CF%80%CE%AE]

The name *Phylakope*, as we have seen, contains the root *phylak-* (*φυλακ-*), from which words such as *phylasso* (*φυλάσσω*= to keep, to guard), *phylax* (*φύλαξ*= guardian), *phylakio* (*φυλάκιο*= outpost), and *phylake* (*φυλακή*= prison), derive. We also have the original root *phyl-* (*φυλ-*), from which we have words such as *phylon* (*φύλον*) and *phyle* (*φυλή*), with the meaning of "tribe". Hence the modern Greek toponyms *Phyle*, *Phylakte*, *Phylake*, etc. Therefore *Phylakope* means "place that looks like an outpost".

This process of expanding roots and joining suffixes requires a long period of time. Perhaps this is why the toponym has been found difficult to interpret, otherwise we should consider the existence of Greek-speaking Pelasgians on the island of Milos (where Phylakope is located) from 2500 BC, in the midst of the Cycladic civilization, even before the Minoans extended their thalassocracy, and a thousand years before the Mycenaeans expanded their kingdom into the Southeastern Aegean.

Kherronesos

I include this toponym from Strabo's *Geography*, not because of its antiquity or important archaeological location, but because it can give us the opportunity to see the history of another word, which is hidden behind the name.

This toponym is referred to by Strabo as a cape or port. The name *Kherronesos*/ *Khersonesos* (*Χερρόνησος*/ *Χερσόνησος*) means "promontory", and derives from the words *kherros*/*khersos* (*χέρρος*/*χέρσος* = land)[232] and *nesos* (*νήσος*= island).[233] The word *nesos* can be associated with the verb *nao*/*neo* (*νάω*/*νέω*= to swim, to float, to flow). The word *kherros*/*khersos* can be analyzed by considering the root *ker-*, with the meaning of "protrusion", e.g. *keras* (*κέρας*= horn).

Other toponyms with the same or similar root, which are mentioned by Strabo, are of interest. For example, *Skyllaion* (cape), *Kenaion*/*Kynos* (cape), *Skironides* (rocks), *Skyros* (island), *Kyllene*

[232] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CF%87%CE%AD%CF%81%CF%83%CE%BF%CF%82]

[233] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%BD%E1%BF%86%CF%83%CE%BF%CF%82]

(mountain), from Greece, as well as *Skylletikos* (bay) and *Skylletion* (seaside town), from Italy. Today we also have cape *Kynosoura* in Marathon and Salamis, while there was also a city with the same name in ancient Sparta.[234]

The interesting thing is that all these place names bear the name of the "dog" (*kynas*), e.g. *Kynosoura*= dog's tail (*oura*= "tail"), *Skylla* (i.e. Scylla and Charybdis), where *skylla*= "she- dog", and so on. Characteristic of these words is that they have the meaning of something protruding, i.e. in the case of a dog, or a dogfish (*skylopsaro* in modern Greek), it has to do with a "long face".

As far as the relationship between the words *skylos/skyllos* (*σκύλος/σκύλλος*) and *kynas* (*κύνας*), both with the meaning of "dog", is concerned, they can be associated with a type **skylnos/*skylnas* (**σκύλνος/*σκύλνας*), from which both previous words can be derived (**skylnos*> *skyllos*, or **skylnas*> *kynas*).

Therefore, these are words of the primordial linguistic substratum of the Eastern Mediterranean and the wider region, which was inherited (without language replacement) by the Greek and the other "IE" languages.

Thematic syllables

One thing that gradually became apparent to me by analyzing the toponyms from Strabo's *Geography*, is that, in many cases, in order to find their etymology we have to divide their roots into individual "fundamental" morphemes, or thematic syllables, as I call them. I have already mentioned, for example, *Larymna* (*La-* + *rymnos*), *labyrinth* (*La-* + *byrion*), *lebinthos* (*Le-* + *binthos*/*benthos*), and so on.

I can list a few more indicative place names. For example, *Lebadeia* (*Λεβάδεια*, modern city of Livadeia) contains a thematic syllable *Le*, *Lei*, or *Li* (*Λε*, *Λει*, or *Λι*). From this thematic syllable

234 [https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%9A%CF%85%CE%BD%CF%8C%CF%83%CE%BF%CF%85%CF%81%CE%B1]

come the words *libas*/*leibas*> *libadi* (*λιβάς*/*λειβάς*> *λιβάδι*= meadow),[235] and *leibo* (*λείβω*= to pour, to drip).[236] So *Lebadeia* means "meadow, wet place". Hence probably the toponym *Leibithra* (*Λείβηθρα*= wet place).

Tegyra (*Τεγύρα*) is another toponym derived from the thematic syllable *Te* and the word *gyros* (*γυρός*= bent, curved).[237] *Tegyros* (*τεγγύρος*) is listed by Hesychius as a bird, or a kind of vulture.[238] In other words, the *tegyros* may express exactly what it is: sullen, with shoulders bowed. *Te* possibly serves as a superlative, as in the word *eteos* (*ἐτεός*= true, authentic). The composition of the word (*e-te-os)* is characteristic, having an *e* before the thematic syllable *Te*, possibly for emphasis. Of similar morphology are words such as *Tegea* (*Τεγέα*), *tegos* (*τέγος*= roof),[239] even the word **Teos*> *Theos* (**Τεός*> *Θεός*= God).

Tanagra (*Τανάγρα*) is another such toponym, which contains the thematic syllable *Ta*. From this syllable the word *tanaos* (*ταναός*= wide, long, tall) derives, bearing the root *tan*-, hence the words *teino/tanyo* (*τείνω*/*τανύω*= to stretch, to spread), *tanystes* (*τανυστής*= tensor), or *tenta* (*τέντα*= tent) as a reborrowing. In fact, the root *ta(n)*-, as a monosyllable root, is a thematic syllable, which is also evident in the well-known phrase "ἢ *τὰν* ἢ ἐπὶ *τᾶς*" ("either [with] this or on this").[240]

In many place names cited by Strabo, such syllables seem to be combined or duplicated, for example, *Boebe*, *Kafkon*, *Kechreai*, *Kekropia*, *Kerkyra*, *Chalkis*, *Kikysion*, *Krokion*, *Gargettos*, *Lelanton*, *Lilaia*, *Peparethos*, *Prepesinthos*, *Tetrapolis*, *Teutheas*, *Thetideion*, *Thettalia*, *Titaresios*, *Tritaia*, and so on.

---

[235] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%BB%CE%B9%CE%B2%CE%AC%CF%82]

[236] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%BB%CE%B5%CE%AF%CE%B2%CF%89]

[237] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%B3%CF%85%CF%81%CF%8C%CF%82]

[238] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CF%84%CE%B5%CE%B3%CE%B3%CF%8D%CF%81%CE%BF%CF%82]

[239] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CF%84%CE%AD%CE%B3%CE%BF%CF%82]

[240]

[https://lsj.gr/wiki/%E1%BC%A2_%CF%84%E1%BD%B0%CE%BD_%E1%BC%A2_%E1%BC%90%CF%80%E1%BD%B6_%CF%84%E1%BE%B6%CF%82]

The primordial character of similar fundamental morphemes is betrayed by several of the toponyms cited by Strabo, such as *Aipy*, *Kopa*, *Pheai, Keos*/*Kos*, *Chaa*, *Oche*, *Chios*, etc. In other words, these are monosyllabic or two-syllable toponyms which are formed with the thematic syllables *Pa*, *Ko*, *Phe*, *Ke*, *Cha*, *Chi*, etc. Another toponym, *Phylakope*, seems to consist of a succession of thematic syllables (*Phy-La-Ko-Pa*). I cannot imagine foreign invaders bringing such "primitive" morphemes and the corresponding toponyms or common words to Greece, e.g. *phaos*, *chaos*, *laas*, *cheo*, *reo*, *phyo*, *kao/kaio*, *rion/ris* (*φάος χάος*, *λάας*, *χέω*, *ρέω*, *φύω*, *κάω/καίω*, *ρίον/ρις*), and so on.

In fact there are many common words that contain these fundamental syllabic morphemes, whether doubled or not, such as *labrys*, *lelaps*, *lebes*, *lekythos*, *kelyphos*, *pege, Pegasos*, *phalos*, *kephale*, *pasa*, *safa*, *teos*, *eteos*, *lilion*, *tettix*, *myrmex*, *gignosko*, *lambano, labe* (*λάβρυς*, *λέλαψ*, *λέβητας*, *λέκυθος*, *κέλυφος*, *πηγή*, *Πήγασος*, *φαλός*, *κεφαλή*, *πάσα*, *σάφα*, *τεός*, *ετεός*, *λίλιον*, *τέττιξ*, *μύρμηξ*, *γιγνώσκω*, *λαμβάνω*, *λαβή*), and so on. Such similar words are innumerable, and it is impossible to separate them into "Greek" and "pre-Greek", at least most of them.

These same thematic syllables, in addition to duplication, are also amenable to augmentation, as is the case with the tenses of verbs in the Greek language (e.g. *lyo*/ *e-lyon*/ *le-lyka*, *lambano*/ *e-labon*/ *ei-lepha*, *phyo*/ *e-phyon*/ *pe-pheka*, *tithemi*/ *e-theka*/ *te-theka* (*λύω*/ *ἔ-λυον*/ *λέ-λυκα*, *λαμβάνω*/ *ἔ-λαβον*/ *εἴ-ληφα*, *φύω*/ *ἔ-φυον*/ *πέ-φυκα*, *τίθημι*/ *ἔ-θηκα*/ *τέ-θηκα*), etc. Thus, we also have the forms *lebinthos*/ *e-rebinthos* (*λέβινθος*/*ἐ-ρέβινθος*), *Saminthos*/ *a-saminthos* (*Σάμινθος*/*ἀ-σάμινθος*), and so on. In another word, *elelisphakos* (*ἐλελίσφακος*= sage), we have both augmentation (with the addition of an initial *e*) and duplication (with the repetition of the syllables *Le-Li*), i.e. *e-le-li-sphakos*. Hence the verb *elelizo*/*elisso* (*ἐλελίζω*/*ἐλίσσω*), or the exclamation *elelef* (*ἐλελεῦ*= "alas!").[241] In the latter word, the thematic syllable *Le* seems to have been anagrammatized to *El*, hence the word *Ellen* (*Ἕλλην*= "Greek").

In fact, all the words of the Greek language probably arose in this way, by combining thematic syllables, to produce more complex roots. For example, the toponym *Pagasai* is derived from two

[241] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%E1%BC%90%CE%BB%CE%B5%CE%BB%CE%AF%CE%B6%CF%89]

thematic syllables *Pa* and *Ga*, and another such syllable *Sa*, which serves as a suffix. From the first two syllables, the word *paga> pege* (*παγά> πηγή*= spring) emerged, so as to produce a root *peg-* (*πηγ-*), from which the word *pegaios* (*πηγαίος*= "sourceful") derived. The type *Pagasetikos* (*Παγασητικός*) is an extension of this process, where the final suffix *-(i)kos* is the culmination of a linguistic course that seems to have lasted millennia.

The etymology of these thematic syllables, from which the Greek language is recomposed, along with their duplications and augmentations, may have been lost in many cases, but if we ignore their existence, we will never reach the correct conclusions about the Greek language. For example, considering that the word *lekythos* (*λέκυθος*= the inside part of something) is derived as *Le* + *kefthos* (*κεύθος*= depth), we are given an opportunity to etymologize the word. By attempting to etymologize the same word as *lekyth-* + *-os*, we will end up nowhere.

Such formation of words with fundamental morphemes goes back to the so-called agglutinative languages, such as today's Turkish, instead of fusional languages, such as modern Greek. If the Greek language derives from such a process of gluing together thematic syllables, and fusing these syllables into roots, prefixes and suffixes, then the source of the Greek language could be traced back to the most distant prehistory, when people first began to articulate speech.

Were the Mycenaeans the first "Greeks?"

Before the decipherment of Linear B, most scholars believed that the first Greeks had arrived in Greece with the Dorian invasion. Michael Ventris, who eventually deciphered the script, initially believed that the Mycenaeans spoke a language other than Greek. This was partly due to a report by Herodotus that Athens was inhabited by Pelasgians before the Greeks. Ultimately, Ventris realized that Linear B was actually written in Greek.

By now, no one disputes the "Greekness" of the Mycenaean script. However, how many have truly examined and understood this script in depth? We shall see that, although the language appearing in the texts is generally Greek in character, many of the names mentioned in the inscriptions

possess an "exotic," not exactly Greek, quality. We will also see that the founding myths of the Mycenaean civilization seem to confirm this "foreign" character.

Elements from myths

Cadmus and Harmonia

Strabo says about Cadmus:
"Then the Phoenicians, who accompanied Cadmus, occupied (Thebes). He fortified the Cadmeian land, and transferred the government to his descendants. The Phoenicians founded Thebes, and included it in the area of Cadmeia. They maintained sovereignty, and exercised it over the greater part of the Boeotians, until the campaign of the Epigonoi (in the late Mycenaean years)".[242]

An indication of the origin of the name *Cadmus*/*Kadmos* (*Κάδμος*) can be given by another version of the name, *Kadmillos*/*Kamillos* (*Κάδμιλλος*/ *Κάμιλλος*):

Kamillos was the youngest follower of a priest in ancient Roman religion. One particular mention is from a Lycian sanctuary in the Athenian agora, where a *kamillos* participates in a sacrifice.[243]

It is worth noting that in the period we are referring to (proto-Mycenaean period) the Phoenicians were not yet a naval power. There were, however, Minoans in Crete, but also Luwians (such as the Lycians) in Asia Minor. We can, for example, judging from the previous reference, consider that the name *Kamillos/Kadmillos> Kadmos* is of Lycian (therefore of IE) origin. In any case, however, it is not a name of Greek origin.

We can add that, according to tradition, Cadmus married Harmonia. If we try to etymologize the name *Kadmos*, according to one view, it may come from the Greek word *kekasmenos*

[242] Strabo, *Geographica* (9.2.3).

[243] [https://www.ascsa.edu.gr/uploads/media/hesperia/146938.pdf]

(*κεκασμένος*= wonderful).[244] Personally, I could relate the name to the word *akademia* (*ακαδημία*= academy), therefore to the later name *Akademos* (*Ακάδημος*), or to the verb *kado* (*κάδω*= to take care).[245] On the other hand, the name *Harmonia*/*Armonia* (*Αρμονία*) is easily etymologized in the Greek language, from the verb *armozo* (*αρμόζω*= to appropriate, to fit).[246] So, which of the two persons is more Greek? *Kadmos* (a foreigner, possibly of IE ancestry), whose name is difficult to etymologize in Greek (if derived from *Kadmillos*), or *Armonia* (a Pelasgian Greek woman), whose name is undoubtedly Greek?

Danaus and the Dardanians

Regarding Danaus, Strabo says:

"Danaus is said to have built the acropolis of the Argives. It seems that he had so much more power than the former rulers of the country, that, according to Euripides, he passed a law that those who were formerly called Pelasgiotes, should be called Danaoi throughout Greece. His tomb, called Palinthus, is located in the middle of the market of the Argives. I suppose the celebrity of this city is the reason why all Greeks had the name Pelasgiotes and Danaoi, as well as Argives."[247]

Danaus, according to mythology, was a king in Libya (i.e. Africa). When he settled in the Peloponnese, he took the throne from King Pelasgos (whose name is attested as Gelanor), and founded Argos.[248]

---

244 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cadmus#:~:text=The%20etymology%20of%20Cadmus's%20name,or%20%22from%20the%20east%22.]

245 [https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.04.0072%3Aentry%3Dka%2Fdw]

246 [https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/%E1%BC%81%CF%81%CE%BC%CE%BF%CE%BD%CE%AF%CE%B1#:~:text=From%20%E1%BC%81%CF%81%CE%BC%CF%8C%CF%82%20(harm%C3%B3s%2C%20%E2%80%9Cjoint,fit%2C%20fix%20together%E2%80%9D).]

247 Strabo, *Geographica* (8.6.9).

248 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Danaus]

It should be noted that, according to Strabo's account, the Pelasgians, the Danaoi and the Argives are inseparable. This is also indicated by the Pelasgian name "Gelanor", with a Greek etymology from *gelanes* (*γελανής*= joyful).[249] As "common" as this etymology may be (in the sense that a pre-Greek name may have been given a Greek meaning), the genealogy of Gelanor is nevertheless characteristic: He was the son of Sthenelus, the son of Krotopus, the son of Agenor, the son of Triops.[250]

More or less, all these names are then found as names of Mycenaean heroes. Did the Mycenaeans borrow all these names and "Hellenized" them, or do the Mycenaeans (the inhabitants of Mycenaean Greece at least) descend from their predecessors, the Pelasgians?

Was Danaus of Libyan origin? Obviously not, since his name may well be associated with the tribe of the Dardanians/Dardanoi. According to *Wikipedia*, they were an early Balkan tribe in the Southern Balkans, and bordered the Illyrians and the Thracians. Some, like Strabo, even considered them an Illyrian tribe.[251] Then part of them migrated to Northwestern Asia Minor, and in Homer they appear as allies of the Trojans during the Trojan War.[252]

The name *Dardanelles* apparently comes from the *Dardanoi* and their leader *Dardanos*, and there was also a city *Dardanus* in Troas. Another city that may be related to the Dardanians is *Adana* in the region of Cilicia, in Southern Asia Minor. This city is related to the *Danuna*, as they are mentioned in Hittite texts, or to the *Denyen*, from Egyptian texts of the Bronze Age.[253] All these names refer to *Danaos* and the *Danaoi*.

---

[249] [https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.04.0057%3Aentry%3Dgelanh%2Fs]

[250] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pelasgus_(king_of_Argos)]

[251] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dardani]

[252]

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dardanians_(Trojan)#:~:text=The%20Dardanoi%20(Greek:%20%CE%94%CE%AC%CF%81%CE%B4%CE%B1%CE%BD%CE%BF%CE%B9;,Vergil%20such%20as%20the%20Aeneid.]

[253] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Denyen]

As far as the etymology of the name *Danaos* (*Δαναός*) is concerned, we can note the word *danaios*> *denaios* (*δαναιός*> *δηναιός*= long-lived),[254] which derives from the adverb *dan*> *den* (*δάν*> *δήν*= for a long time, a long time ago).[255]

It is also worth noting that during the period in which the events narrated in the myths occur (i.e. the beginning of the Mycenaean period), Egypt was conquered by the Iksos (from 1650 to 1550 BC). The view that the Iksos were invaders of mixed origin, i.e. IE tribes that during their descent mixed with Semitic peoples in the areas they settled, has been rejected.[256] However, it is considered that during this period (first half of the 2nd millennium BC) tribes from the Steppes came to Asia Minor,[257] and it is equally likely that these tribes reached as far as the Middle East and Northern Africa. This is also reinforced by the traditions about the arrival of Cadmus from Phoenicia and Danaus from Libya or Egypt.

The Dardanoi/Danaoi may have belonged to one of these tribes. When the Egyptians drove the Iksos out of their land, or about that time, Danaus, whether he belonged to the Iksos or not, may have left Egypt, and settled in Greece. In other words, he could have been a warlord of IE origin, who, like Cadmus, after trying his luck in areas of Anatolia, the Middle East and Northern Africa, ended up in Greece, where he founded his kingdom with the wealth and power he would have previously acquired. In any case, however, and as far as our discussion is concerned, Danaus was not of Greek origin.

Pelops and the Phrygians

The foreign origin of several of the heroes of the Mycenaean era is also attested by Strabo. He characteristically says:

---

[254] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%B4%CE%B7%CE%BD%CE%B1%CE%B9%CF%8C%CF%82]

[255] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%B4%CE%B7%CE%BD]

[256] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hyksos]

[257]

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Luwians#:~:text=There%20is%20no%20consensus%20on%20Luwian%20origins,new%20populations%20including%20speakers%20of%20Anatolian%20languages.]

Hecataeus of Miletus says about the Peloponnese that before the time of the Greeks it was inhabited by barbarians. Perhaps the whole of Greece was, at one time, a settlement of barbarians, judging by older testimonies. Pelops brought colonists from Phrygia to the Peloponnese, which was named after him. Danaus brought settlers from Egypt. Dryopes, Kafkones, Pelasgoi, Leleges and other barbarian nations divided the country from each other on the lower side of the isthmus. The case was the same on the other side of the isthmus. Because the Thracians, under their leader Eumolpus, conquered Attica. Tereus from Daulis conquered Phocaea. The Phoenicians, with their leader Cadmus, occupied the region of Cadmeia. Aiones, Temmikes and Hyantes settled in Boeotia. Some names indicate their barbarian origins, such as Kekrops, Kodrys, Aioklos, Kothys, Drymas and Krinachos. Thracians, Illyrians and Epirotes are still settled today on the edges of Greece. In the past, the territory they occupied was more extensive, although even now the barbarians occupy a large part of the country, which, without a doubt, is Greece..."

Regarding Pelops, Strabo says:
"It is said that the Achaean Phthiotes, who with Pelops raided the Peloponnese, settled in Laconia, and were so distinguished for their bravery, that the Peloponnese, which for a long time was called Argos, was then called Achaean Argos. And not only did the Peloponnese have this name, but Laconia was also named that peculiarly."[258]

The relationship between the Phrygians and the Achaeans of Pthiotis, with whom Pelops came, is not clarified by Strabo. However, Pelops is considered by ancient writers to be of Phrygian or Lydian origin. He is considered to be the son of Tantalus and father of Atreus. Born in Phrygia or Lydia, he left his homeland to settle in Greece, in Pisa in the Peloponnese.[259] It is also interesting to note that his father Tantalus is sometimes referred to as the "king of Phrygia", in the region of Asia Minor where the state of Lydia later appears, at the beginning of the 1st millennium BC.[260]

[258] Strabo, *Geographica* (8.1.2)

[259] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pelops]

[260] [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tantalus]

The name *Pelops* (*Πέλοψ*) is considered to be etymologized from the words *pelos* (*πελός*= gray, dark) and *ops* (*ὄψ*= face).[261] This etymology describes a ceremony in ancient Olympia (which was located near Pisa) where sacrifices were made to chthonic deities during the night in honor of Pelops, before sacrifices were made during the day in honor of the heavenly god Zeus.[262]

From the above narrative of Strabo, we find that in the Mycenaean years Greece was inhabited by various tribes, such as Dryopes, Kafkones, Leleges, Aiones, Temmices, Hyantes, Phrygians, Thracians, Illyrians, Epirotes, etc.

It is also characteristic that Strabo considers names such as Kekrops, Kodrys, Aioklos, Kothys, Drymas, Krinachos to be barbaric. Nevertheless, the same names could well appear in the inscriptions of Linear B.

Strabo himself was obviously unaware that during the Mycenaean period Greek was already spoken as the main language, although around the Mycenaean territory, or even within it, there would have been several other Pelasgian languages or dialects left, either related or not to the Greek language.

The most characteristic finding, then, is that the Greek language, while it may have been influenced by other neighboring languages or dialects, was already spoken during the Mycenaean period, and, in all probability, it had been spoken for quite some time before that.

Elements from Linear B

In the past I compiled a dictionary of Linear B, which consists of more than 5000 words.[263] At first glance one might be impressed by its "Greekness". For example, we have personal names, such as *a-ke-ra-wo* (*Archelawos*), *a-pi-me-de* (*Amphimedes*), *e-do-me-ne-u* (*Eidomeneus*> *Idomeneus*), *e-*

[261] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%A0%CE%AD%CE%BB%CE%BF%CF%88]

[262] [https://religion.fandom.com/wiki/Pelops#:~:text=The%20shrine%20of%20Pelops%20at,of%20Artemis%20Kordax%20(Pausanias%206.22.]

[263] [https://archive.org/details/LinearBLexicon]

te-wo-ke-re-we (*Etewoklewes*> *Eteocles*), *e-u-ru-po-to-re-mo* (*Euryptolemos*), *o-re-ta* (*Orestas*> *Orestes*), *te-se-u* (*Theseus*), *a-re-ka-sa-da-ra* (*Alexandra*), *te-o-do-ra* (*Theodora*).

We still have whole phrases, such as:
i-je-ri-ja do-e-ra e-ne-ka ku-ru-si-jo i-je-ro-jo
iereias doelai eneka chrysoio ieroio
ἱερείας δοέλαι ἕνεκα χρυσοῖο ἱεροῖο
("Slaves of the priestess for the sake of sacred gold")

No one can doubt that the previous sentence is Greek, whatever the ambiguity of the writing may be, due to its syllabic character.

However, in many cases the personal names seem Greek to us because they have survived in later times, even if we do not know their etymology. For example, *Archelaos* can be derived from the words *arche* (*αρχή*= principle), and *laos* (*λαός*= people), but *Idomeneus* is of unknown etymology. There are also personal names whose origin is rather "exotic." We have for example:

ai-ta-ro-we/a-ta-ro-we
Some etymologies give the transliteration *Aithalowes*> *Aithaloeis*, from the word *aithale* (*αιθάλη*= smoke). For me the most probable transliteration is *Atarowes*, from the PIE root *atar*-, which means "father". This root is attested in the Hittite dictionary[264], but also in the ancient Greek dictionary as *atta* (*ἄττα*).[265] So I wonder if the name is of Anatolian origin.

e-ke-ri-a-wo
This is a high-ranking official from Pylos (perhaps the king himself), named *Encheliawos/ Encheliawon*. His name is reminiscent of the tribe of the *Encheloi*. According to *Wikipedia*, in ancient sources they appear as one of the main Illyrian tribes. They are also associated with the mythical narrative of Cadmus and Harmonia, a tradition deeply rooted in the Illyrian peoples.[266]

[264] [https://www.assyrianlanguages.org/hittite/en_lexique_hittite.htm]

[265] [https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.04.0058%3Aentry%3Da)%2Ftta2]

[266] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Enchele]

There are other persons from the tablets of Linear B with names "marginally Greek", such as *a-di-nwa-ta* (*Adinwatas*), *ne-de-wa-ta* (*Nedewatas*), *a-pe-ri-ta-wo* (*Apelitawon*), *ta-ta-ro* (*Tantalos*), names probably IE but not necessarily of Greek origin.

On the tablets of Linear B there is also a person whose name is *pu$_2$-ke-ki-ri*. This name is clearly non-Greek. The corresponding Greek name would have been *Phygekles* (**pu-ke-ke-re*), and the fact that the misspelling is observed in two consecutive syllables (*ki-ri*) indicates that it is not a mistake. Therefore this person seems to have been a foreigner, possibly of Minoan or Luwian origin. Some have assumed that it is the name of a woman, e.g. **Phygekris* (**Φυγέκρις*), but again the name is not Greek.

Nevertheless, some names of women are characteristic, such as *e-ra-ta-ra* (*Erathra*), *e-ri-ta* (*Eritha*), *ke-ra-so* (*Keraso*), *si-ma* (*Sima*). Because these names can be considered Pelasgian, due to their morphology, one could say that when the Greeks settled in Greece, they mingled with women from the earlier pre-Greek Pelasgian population. However, such an assumption does not seem to be valid, as the name *Eritha* or *Erathra* is as Greek as the name *e-ru-to-ro* (*erythros*= "red"), which is also found in the texts of Linear B.

It should also be noted that similar names, which could also be called Pelasgian, refer to men, such as *si-ma-ko* (*Simakos*), *si-no-u-ro* (*Sinouros*), *su-di-ni-ko* (*Sydnikos*), *ku-ra-no* (*Kylanos*), *ku-pe-se-ro* (*Kypselos*), *ku-ka-da-ro* (*Kykadaros*), etc. The morphology of such names is not "less Greek" than that of names such as *Orestes* or *Theseus*, although the latter two names became better known. For example, the modern Greek toponyms *Theseion* and *Kypsele* derived from *Theseus* and *Kypselos*, respectively. In other words, no clear distinction can be made between "Mycenaean-Greek" and "Pelasgian-pre-Greek" names.

The tablets of Linear B also show that the Mycenaeans had trouble pronouncing toponyms and ethnonyms common to Modern Greek. For example:

e-u-te-re-u

This is probably the toponym *Eutresis*. The Mycenaeans pronounced the name as *Eutreus*, instead of **e-u-te-re-si* (*Eutresis*), avoiding thus the suffix *-sis*, or ignoring the etymology of the toponym, which we examined earlier.

da-pu$_2$-ri-to-jo

This is obviously the Labyrinth, in the Minoan palace. The Mycenaeans pronounced the name as *daphyrinthos* (**da-pu$_2$-ri-to*), with 'd' rather than 'l', instead of *labyrinthos* as it is in Modern Greek. Therefore the Pelasgian, pre-Mycenaean, form of the name has prevailed (the thematic syllable *La* at the beginning of the word *labyrinthos* is common to many other Modern Greek words, and has a primordial character).

ko-ro-ku-ra-i-jo

This is probably the name of Corfu (Kerkyra< Korkyra). The Mycenaeans called the island *Krokyla/ Krokyra* (**ko-ro-ku-ra*), instead of *Korkyra* (**ko-ku-ra*), as if they did not know the origin of the name: *κerketes* (ship's ballast), *kerkis* (weaving shuttle), *kerkouros* (light ship), *kerkos* (tail).[267] Thus, if *Kerkyra* means "island with a long tail" (from its shape), the Mycenaeans ignored that.

ko-ri-si-jo (*Korinsios*)
za-ku-si-jo (*Zakynsios*)
ka-ra-pa-so (*Krapasos*)

The Mycenaeans said *Korinsios* instead of *Korinthios*, *Zakynsios* instead of *Zakynthios*, *Krapasos* instead of *Karpathos* (**Karpasos* in Linear B should be written as **ka-pa-so*).

Based on the forms *Korinsios*/*Zakynsios*, some might argue that the Mycenaeans had difficulty pronouncing the cluster *-nth-* because it is "pre-Greek." However, we have seen in this study that the cluster in question is secondary; that is, it arises primarily from roots ending in *-n*, combined with a suffix *-sos*/*-tos*/*-thos*. It is very possible that during the Mycenaean era there were already

[267] [https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/resolveform?type=start&lookup=kerk&lang=greek]

some Greek-speaking Pelasgians who said *Korinthos* instead of *Korinsos*, or *Karpathos* instead of *Krapasos*, and that the Mycenaeans simply entered the stage of the Greek language late.

Another point worth mentioning is that besides the Lacedaemonians (*ra-ke-da-mi-ni-jo*), Achaeans (*a-ka-wo*), and Argives (*a-ke-jo*), the Dorians (*do-ri-je-u*) are also recorded in Mycenaean texts. This means the Dorians were present in Greece as early as the Mycenaean period. We saw previously that the Dorians possibly originated from Oloura/*Doloura> Dorion (compare this to Dorylaion in Asia Minor). The name **Doloura* is characteristically Pelasgian. Consequently, the Pelasgian Greeks must chronologically precede the Mycenaean Greeks.

Elements from the Hittite texts

Attarsiyas and Madduwattas

Attarsiyas and Madduwattas were two prominent figures, known for their conflicts in Western Anatolia around the late 15th and early 14th centuries BCE. Their interactions are primarily documented in the *Indictment* of *Madduwattas*, a Hittite text that serves as the primary source of information on their history.[268]

While Madduwattas is mentioned as a warlord who invaded Western Asia Minor, Attarsiyas was a warlord from Ahhiyawa, who lived around 1400 BC. He is known from a single Hittite text which recounts his military activities in Western Anatolia and Alasiya (the Hittite name of Cyprus). Scholars have noted possible connections between the names *Attarsiyas* and *Atreus* from Greek mythology (as well as between the name *Ahhiyawa* and the *Achaeans*).[269]

The similarity between the names *Attarsiyas* and *Atreus* is indeed characteristic. The name *Atreus* is not mentioned in the Mycenaean texts. There is, however, the name *Adinwatas* (to which we referred earlier). Its resemblance to the name *Madduwattas* is striking. We mentioned earlier that the name *Adinwatas* doesn't sound Greek. Now our suspicions are confirmed by the presence of the same or similar name in Asia Minor. As far as the comparison of the names *Attarsiyas* and

[268] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madduwatta]

[269] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attarsiya]

Atreus is concerned, it seems that the Greek name (*Atreus*> *Atreas*) comes from a non-Greek one (*Attarsiyas*). Paradoxically, however, the latter is considered the leader of the *Ahhiyawa* (i.e. the *Achaeans*).

Ahhiyawa and Arzawa

While many have associated the *Ahhiyawa* with the *Achaeans*, I may be the first (and if not the first, then one of the first) to dare to associate the *Arzawa* with the *Argives.* The land of the Ahhiyawa, as shown by the Hittite texts, is located west of the Hittite kingdom, in Western Asia Minor. However, it may have been an extension of the Mycenaeans-Achaeans, with their conquests on the western coast of Asia Minor.[270]

Similar reasoning can be applied to the kingdom of Arzawa, as it appears that Ephesus (Apasa in Hittite texts), which was located on the coast of Western Asia Minor, was part of their kingdom. The problem, however, is that the region of Arzawa appears to be inhabited by Luwians, with Luwian rulers (with names such as Kupanta-Kurunta, Tarhundaradu, or Uhha-Ziti).[271]

Did Greeks, early in prehistory, establish colonies in Asia Minor, before the Luwians arrived in the same area? Or were both the Achaeans and the Argives originally Luwian tribes who at some point (e.g. at the end of the Bronze Age) settled in Greece? Personally, I believe that the most consensual and unifying way to get out of this dilemma is to assume that both Greek and Luwian were already spoken in Greece and in Asia Minor Asia respectively, while the "IE" newcomers from the Steppes simply adopted the corresponding languages. For example, the name *Arzawa* contains the same root (*arz*-) as *Argos* (*arg*-). Besides, *Argissa* in Thessaly contains the same root too. But Argos, as we have seen, has been continuously inhabited since the 5th millennium BC, while Argissa was founded in the 7th millennium BC. In other words, I believe that we must go quite far back in time

[270] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Achaeans_(Homer)#Hittite_documents]

[271] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arzawa#:~:text=The%20kingdom%20had%20a%20tumultuous,Ahhiyawa%20of%20the%20Hittite%20sources.]

to explain the common origin of such toponyms/ethnonyms, certainly earlier than the period of the Mycenaeans, the Luwians, and the Hittites of the 2nd millennium BC.

In conclusion, references from mythological traditions of the Ancient Greeks regarding Mycenaean heroes of foreign origin (*Kadmos*, *Danaos*, *Pelops*) appear to be corroborated by evidence from Linear B inscriptions. This evidence includes Mycenaean rulers and officials with foreign-sounding names (*Encheliawon*, *Adinwatas*, *pu$_2$-ke-ki-ri*), as well as Mycenaean scribes who struggled to correctly pronounce Greek names or toponyms (**daphyrinthos*, *Krokyla*, *Krapasos*, etc.). These references are further reinforced by Hittite texts, featuring proper names such as *Attarsiyas* and *Madduwattas*, and toponyms/ethnonyms such as *Ahhiyawa* and *Arzawa*.

In the past it was believed that the Greek language came to Greece with the Dorian invasion, around 1200 BC. Now, as it has been proven that the language of Mycenaean Greece was Greek, and, as the Dorians are mentioned in the Mycenaean inscriptions, the arrival of the Greeks has been placed in the early 2nd millennium BC.

It is thought that there were two possible waves of invasions in Greece during the 2nd millennium BC. A wave from the north, consisting of Paleo-Balkan populations, which are related to the gray Minyan pottery,[272] and perhaps a second wave from Asia Minor, consisting of Luwians,[273] and possibly other tribes. However, none of these waves seem to have brought the Greek language to Greece.

The Mycenaeans, although I believe that they were not the first Greeks (while the Mycenaean rulers may not have been Greeks at all), contributed significantly to the concentration, establishment and dissemination of the Greek language. It is also important that the Greek linguistic substratum has preserved elements of dialects and languages of other peoples (Phrygians, Thracians, Luwians, Minoans, etc.) that have now been lost. However, the Greek language,

[272] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minyan_ware]

[273] [https://www.ascsa.edu.gr/uploads/media/hesperia/147122.pdf]

although other languages may have contributed to its formation, must have already been spoken, certainly before the 2nd millennium BC.

Was there ever "the coming of the Greeks?"

A characteristic of the collection and analysis of toponyms that I did based on Strabo's *Geography*, is that if we consider the toponyms presented pre-Greek, then there are no other "Greek" toponyms left to replace the former. How do we explain the fact that the "first Greeks", who supposedly came from "outside", did not replace a single place name with the name of another toponym of a city or region of their place of origin, so that the new toponym would have had a clearly Greek name?

Such toponyms appear much later in Greece, long after the Mycenaean period. For example, the name *Neapolis* (*nea polis*= new city) appears in toponyms from the Archaic period, and in many cases it refers to Greek colonies outside Greece. There is not a single such case in Mycenaean texts, although the Greek word *polis* was already used in Greece probably since the time of *Poliochne*, at least from the 3rd millennium BC.

A suspicion that one may have is that in some toponyms ending in -*na*, the word "new" may be hidden. As with *Poliochne*, for example, one could also assume regarding *Pallene* that the word "new" (*nea*) is hidden in the second component of the name, with the first component being the theme *polis/palos* ("city"). However, in Mycenaean texts the word "new" (*ne-wo*, *newos*> *neFos*> *neos*) contains a digamma (*F*), and is pronounced as *nevoς/nefos*, or *neouos*, according to the Latin *nuovo*. Nowhere, however, does a place name of the form *Polinewa*/*PolineFa* appear in Mycenaean Greece, which would have gradually evolved into *Polinea*/ *Polineia*, with the elimination of the digamma from the word *newos*/*neFos*.

These elements essentially serve as an indication, if not proof, that the Mycenaeans were not the first Greeks, that the Greek language was already spoken in Greece from much earlier, and that there was never linguistic replacement in Greece.

But, since when has the Greek language been spoken? It was certainly spoken before the arrival of the Steppe people, if they arrived during the 2nd millennium BC. Such a late timeframe is insufficient to explain the transition from Pelasgian to Greek word forms, as the language had already been fully shaped by the Mycenaean period.

I believe that the Greek language must have reached a rather complete form as early as the period of Phylakope, Eleutherna and Eftresis, with a presence at least in Central and South Greece, as well as in the Cyclades and Crete, from the 3rd millennium BC. The Greekness of these place names is indisputable, as is their antiquity, as well as the continuity of their habitation, in many cases.

A modern Greek who reads Homer can understand that the language is Greek, and in many cases he can also understand the meaning:
Μῆνιν ἄειδε, θεά, Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆος οὐλομένην
("Sing, goddess, the accursed wrath of Achilles, Peleus' son").[274]

The only word that can present some difficulty for a modern Greek is *oulomene* (*οὐλομένη*= accursed), which derives from the, I would call it Pelasgian, verb *ollymi* (*ὄλλυμι*= to destroy).[275] The same applies to the Mycenaean texts. We have seen, for example, the phrase *ἱερείας δοέλαι ἕνεκα χρυσοῖο ἱεροῖο*. In this case, all words have been preserved in the modern Greek vocabulary. The time interval between the Mycenaean civilization and our time is about 3500 years. If we go back another 3500 years from the Mycenaean era, we reach 5000 BC. This was the time when Argos was founded in the Peloponnese, and from the same period is the tablet of Dispilio in Kastoria.[276]

[274] [https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.01.0133]

[275] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%E1%BD%84%CE%BB%CE%BB%CF%85%CE%BC%CE%B9]

[276] [https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%A0%CE%B9%CE%BD%CE%B1%CE%BA%CE%AF%CE%B4%CE%B1_%CF%84%CE%BF%CF%85_%CE%94%CE%B9%CF%83%CF%80%CE%B7%CE%BB%CE%B9%CE%BF%CF%8D]

This does not mean that if we went back to Greece in the 5th millennium we would hear the Greek language spoken, but even today if we hear Pontic Greeks speaking in their dialect, we will not understand what they are saying. However, as now, so then we could distinguish some words, such as *argos*/*agros* (*άργος*/*αγρός*= "field"), with the root *arg-*/*agr-*, which is found in *Argos* and *Argissa*; *thalassa* (*θάλασσα*= "sea"), with the theme *ka(l)las/salas*, which we discussed earlier; *paga*> *pege* (*παγά*> *πηγή*= "spring"), with the thematic syllables *Pa* and *Ga*, and so on. Without such words and themes, whose origin is primordial, the Greek language would have no meaning.

Although in order to find the birth of the Greek language, in at least an elementary form, we could go back to the Neolithic period, or perhaps even earlier, a decisive stage for its development could be considered the so-called collapse of the Late Neolithic period (between 3800-3200 BC).

During this period, many important settlements in the Balkan region and Greece seem to have been abandoned, such as Tell Yunatsite and Karanovo in Bulgaria, or Orthopetra and Sitagroi in Northern Greece.[277] In many cases, the settlements were violently destroyed before being abandoned. Radiocarbon dating has actually revealed long periods (700-1000 years) of abandonment in many settlements.[278] There are also researchers, like John Coleman, who believe that it was during this period that the first Greek speakers came to Greece.[279]

Such a view seems to be supported by genetic evidence as well. It is thought that haplogroup R1b arrived in the Balkan region, including areas close to Greece, as early as the Mesolithic period, but the main subgroup associated with Indo-European migrations arrived during the Early Bronze Age, probably around 4200-3500 BC. The main R1b subgroup found in modern Greeks, R1b-Z2103, is associated with expansions of peoples from the Pontic-Caspian Steppe.[280]

---

[277] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neolithic_decline]

[278] [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/262357643_New_14C_evidence_for_the_Late_Neolithic-Early_Bronze_Age_transition_in_Southeast_Europe]

[279] [https://www.academia.edu/4908240/An_Archaeological_Scenario_for_the_Coming_of_the_Greeks_ca_3200_B_C]

[280] [https://indo-european.eu/2017/06/on-the-origin-of-r1a-and-r1b-subclades-in-greece/]

It is not certain, however, that the Late Neolithic gap is due to a generalized abandonment. Instead, settlements during this period appear to shift toward coastal locations along the Aegean. This move was likely done for the exploitation of the maritime trade of metals and other goods that became available with the onset of the Bronze Age and the rise of the first major civilizations in Mesopotamia and Egypt.[281]

The same would apply to any new migrants arriving from the Steppes or elsewhere. Let us not forget that at the end of the Bronze Age (1200 BCE), the Mycenaean palaces were destroyed one after another, and nothing comparable was built in Greece until perhaps the Parthenon in the 5th century BC. Yet it is now well-known that during that intervening 700-year "gap," the Greek language never ceased to be spoken. There is, therefore, no reason to fixate on 1200, 2000, or 3200 BC to pinpoint the "arrival" of the Greeks, who, as it appears, neither "arrived" nor "left" at any point.

I would also like to draw attention to the risks inherent in linking languages with genes. The fact, for example, that modern European peoples of the Western Mediterranean speak Romance (Latin-derived) languages does not mean they were colonized by Latin-speaking migrants. On the contrary, it is a case of cultural assimilation, that is, the Latin language was adopted in the territories occupied by the Roman Empire for reasons of political administration, religion, employment opportunities, and so on.

The same could be said for the dominance of the Greek language during the Hellenistic, Classical, or Archaic periods, or even on a smaller scale during the Mycenaean period. If we take a step back, is it possible that the Greek language, along with Luwian, Minoan, and the Cycladic language, evolved out of a linguistic continuum that had developed in the broader region of the Eastern Mediterranean and Anatolia, perhaps during the Late Neolithic or Early Bronze Age? Could it be that the so-called IE languages evolved in a similar fashion?[282]

[281] [https://www.ime.gr/chronos/01/en/nl/tn/index.html]

[282] On the subject you can see a text I had written in the past, entitled *Cultural assimilation and the problem of IE.* [https://www.scribd.com/document/197910874/Cultural-Assimilation-and-the-Problem-of-IE]

Regarding the IE languages, we may consider how they originally emerged. If we go back 10000 years to the Pontic Steppes, we find only Mesolithic hunter-gatherers. It was then that the Neolithic Revolution began in the Near East. The same people who settled in Thessaly, Greece, and the rest of Europe from the Near East, would have also settled in the Steppes. A portion of the vocabulary of these two linguistic groups, the PIE and the Paleo-Europeans/Paleo-Anatolians, may have been common long before the Steppe people began their migrations toward Europe during the Bronze Age.

These same linguistic groups would have been in constant contact throughout the intervening period, continuously exchanging linguistic elements. There does not appear to have been a rupture in the linguistic continuum spoken across the broader region. We have seen, for example, that the theme *ka(l)las*/*salas*, which is related to the Greek *alas*/*als* (sea), is found in Krahe's hydronyms from Northern Europe (which he considered Proto-Indo-European), it has an IE etymology (from the root **sal*-), yet it is also found in the Paleo-Iberian language (which is considered pre-IE) in the word **calappacu* (sea- turtle). How can we interpret this coincidence?

Personally, I believe that just as there was never an "arrival of the Greeks" in Greece, there was likewise no "arrival of the Indo-Europeans" in Europe. Population movements have always existed, but I do not believe there was ever a single, defining event that changed the speech of an entire continent. I also believe that if a common language existed in the past that significantly influenced the languages of Europe, it must have been spoken further south than the Steppes, most likely in the region of the East Aegean and Anatolia (where the oldest Indo-European languages are attested). This language would have spread both through population movements and the exchange of ideas. This is also why modern English is about half Greek and Latin in origin.

For the same reason, I would say that the Greek language is two-thirds Pelasgian in origin, due to the abundance of Pelasgian elements in its vocabulary. By the term "Pelasgian," I essentially mean the continuity of the language from the earlier "Pelasgian" forms to the later "Greek" ones, without any substantial rupture during the transition. The transformation, for example, of the earlier form *drops* (*δρώψ*) into the latter form *anthropos* (*ἄνθρωποϛ*= human), indicates this very transition.

Ultimately, whether we label the first word "Pelasgian" and the second "Greek" is, I believe, of little significance.

Conclusions

The wide homogeneity of toponyms over an area covering the Mediterranean and Anatolia, as far as the Middle East and India, leads us to assume the spread of a primordial linguistic continuum, which probably existed since the beginning of the Neolithic period.

In Greece, in many cases, it is not only toponyms that have survived from that prehistoric period, but also common words. We have seen the root *arg*-, with the meaning of *argos*/*agros* (field), which is contained in *Argissa*, which was founded in the 7th millennium BC, and *Argos*, which has been continuously inhabited since the 5th millennium BC. Another example is the Paleo-Iberian word **calappacu* (sea turtle), and the theme *ca(l)las/ka(l)las*, or *salas*, which appears in Krahe's hydronymy from Northern and Western Europe, as well as in Greek toponyms, e.g. *Kalamos*, *Salamis*, etc., and common words, e.g. *thalassa* (sea), *alati* (salt), *kalami* (reed), *salos* (uproar), and so on. These are examples of linguistic continuity in both place names and common words.

There are many place names in Greece that have been characterized as pre-Greek, but which actually contain suffixes and roots that are Greek. We have seen, for example, words and place names with the suffix *-nthos* (e.g. *Korynthos* = *koryn* + *-thos*), which can be etymologized in the Greek language, while the suffix can arise within the framework of the same language. We also saw that the most well-known Greek suffix *-(i)os/-(i)a/-(i)on* can be derived from an earlier generic suffix *-s*, which also produces words ending in *-x* (e.g. *pidak-s* → *pidax*), or *-ps* (e.g. *konop-s* → *konops*).

Such examples and transformations show that in many cases the words that make up the vocabulary of the Modern Greek language arise smoothly from earlier Pelasgian forms. For example, *erebinthos*/*lebinthos* (> *rebithi*= chickpea) can be derived from *binthos* (> *bathos*/ *bythos*= depth/bottom), with the augmentative *e*, and a thematic syllable *Le* or *Re* (i.e. *e-Re-*

binthos/ Le-binthos), without having to assume the case of linguistic borrowing or language replacement.

In this sense, no clear distinction can be made between "Pelasgian pre-Greek" and "Greek" toponyms and common words. The same applies to the Mycenaean period, as evidence analyzed from Mycenaean inscriptions and founding myths indicates the foreign origin of the first Mycenaean rulers, an observation that highlights the fact that the Greek language must have been spoken much earlier. The same claim is also supported by the analysis of toponyms that bear Greek names (e.g. *Poliochne*, *Eleftherna*, *Phylakope*, and so on), and which were continuously inhabited from the 3rd millennium BC, until the end of the Bronze Age.

This finding leads us to the conclusion that the Greek language, while we could trace it in its first steps as early as the beginning of the Neolithic period (perhaps even earlier if some elements from the Paleolithic period have survived), must have taken a relatively complete form as early as the end of the Neolithic period- beginning of the Bronze Age (second half of the 4th millennium BC).

Although there seem to be traces of abandonment and interruption in this period, there are similar incidents of destruction and desolation from other periods, such as at the beginning of the 2nd millennium BC (where the arrival of the Greeks has traditionally been placed), or at the end of the Mycenaean period (where it was previously believed that the first Greeks had arrived, with the "Dorian invasion"). In other words, there is no decisive period that can be linked to the "coming of the Greeks".

Similar reasoning can be applied to the broader group of languages to which the Greek language is considered to belong, the Indo-European family of languages. Personally, I believe that what is called "Indo-Europeans" today should be renamed "Steppe peoples", because I consider their migrations from the Steppes toward Europe or Anatolia to have been only one stage in the formation of the languages of these regions.

This is particularly evident in the case of Greece, where the Pelasgian linguistic substratum remains alive and well. In numerous instances, its roots can be etymologized directly within the

Greek language, without the need to resort to some hypothetical reconstructed PIE root. This is precisely why I maintain that the Greek language must have already been spoken before the "Indo-Europeans" arrived in Greece.

However, this view can be the basis for a more general ascertainment about the origin of the IE languages. We have seen, for example, that as the root or theme *sal-*/*kal-* (*salas*/*ka(l)las*) has an IE etymology related to the sea, and since it appears in a number of toponyms from all over Europe, as well as in the Paleo-Iberian word **calappacu*, we should conclude that at least some part of the IE languages is of Paleo-European origin.

Also, if the IE vocabulary contains roots and themes related to the sea, it is reasonable to assume that the original cradle of these peoples was not the Steppes, but probably the area around the Eastern Aegean and Anatolia, where the oldest IE languages are attested. Furthermore, we must push the origin of these languages further back in time so that we can account for the wide distribution of toponyms that contain common roots (*ar-*, *al-*, *sal-*, *kal-*, and so on), and all words derived from the same or similar roots. Judging by the case of the Greek language, the first traces of the IE languages could be found in the Neolithic period.

In the present study, to maintain cohesion and avoid overextending the scope, I have not delved into words that could potentially have a Paleolithic origin. Regarding this, you may refer to my original work, *Toponyms in Strabo's Geography*.[283] Examples of words that could be compared include *lykos* (wolf), *arktos* (bear), *lithos* (stone), *pelekys* (axe), *opsidianos* (obsidian), and so on, terms, that is, for common animals existing since then, or items related to lithic technology. The first two words (*arktos* and *lykos*) will be briefly examined below, in the Appendix. However, we must first ensure that either the Greek or Luwian language was spoken at the beginning of the 3rd millennium before taking the great leap into the depths of prehistory.

I believe that the gap of the 3rd millennium in terms of written texts can be filled thanks to future archaeological discoveries. Let us not forget that we have writing from the second half of the 4th

[283] [https://archive.org/details/ToponymsInStraboSGeography]

millennium BC in Egypt and Mesopotamia. Until such precious texts or corresponding evidence from other scientific fields are discovered, what remains is for each individual researcher to take their own language and search for its deepest substratum, just as I have done with my own language, Greek.

At this point I want to conclude with one last *word* (*λέξη*). From the Greek verb *λέγω*, otherwise *λαλώ*.[284] It is reduced to a thematic syllable ("IE root") *Λα*, with duplication. Hence the Latin *lallo*, or the English *loll*...[285]

Appendix

The problem of linguistic continuity

When I first looked into the problem of continuity in European languages, I happened to find the *Eupedia* maps showing the first Neolithic settlements in Europe.[286] I immediately noticed that these horizons more or less coincide with the later peoples of Europe. A characteristic example is the widespread Neolithic archaeological horizon of Cardium Pottery in Italy, which occupies the entire Western Mediterranean.

Could the first traces of the Latin languages be traced back to this horizon? The answer of most experts would be negative, simply because Latin speakers are traditionally considered to have come from the Steppes, and to have settled in the Western Mediterranean much later. However, regarding Greece, we have already said enough about the continuity of the language even from the era of Argissa (7th millennium BC).

Population movements after the Neolithic revolution would obviously have occurred, such as the migration of peoples from the Steppes, which is related to the Corded Ware culture, in the period 2900-2350 BC, but I personally do not believe that these peoples played such an important role in

[284] [https://lsj.gr/wiki/%CE%BB%CE%B1%CE%BB%CF%8E]

[285] [https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/lallo]

[286] [http://www.eupedia.com/europe/neolithic_europe_map.shtml]

the later linguistic composition of Europe, at least not in Mediterranean Europe, especially in Greece, which seems to have remained largely unaffected by these movements.

I believe that the evolution of the European language groups was the result of a long-term process, which had at least two important stages, one during the Neolithic period with the arrival of the first farmers from the East, and another one with the movement of nomadic cattle-breeders from the Pontic Steppes in the Bronze Age. But the process of linguistic assimilation across the European continent would have taken millennia to complete at every stage, so that there is no room to talk about immediate language replacement.

Regarding the problems of IE theory, we spoke earlier. Word reconstructions for finding the "Proto-Indo-European" language are based on historical texts (Sanskrit, Greek, Latin), without it being possible to verify the validity of these reconstructions, since the "Proto-Indo-Europeans" have disappeared. Furthermore, for many of the word roots common to various European languages, it is unknown whether they pre-existed in the PIE vocabulary and since when, or if they arose through subsequent borrowing after the Steppe peoples settled in their new homelands. In many cases, this creates the illusion that the Steppe peoples, during their later migrations, brought these words to the areas of their settlement.

A typical example is the word *ippos* (*ίππος*= horse), which is clearly a linguistic loan in the Greek language. There is not a single other Greek word that starts with *ipp*, or contains the cluster *-pp-*, while all corresponding words are compound (e.g. *ippokomos*, *ippodromos*, and so on). In all other "IE" languages there is also another word for this particular animal. For example, *cavallo* in Italian, *horse* in English, *pferd* in German, *kalë* in Albanian, *loshad* in Russian, *alogo* in Greek, and so on.[287] In Persian, the original form *asb* has been preserved, which the loan word *ippos*, or *equos*, apparently derives from.

The previous analysis shows that words such as *ippos* entered the languages of the European peoples as a loan from the region where this type of horse was domesticated, while each people

[287] [http://www.indifferentlanguages.com/words/horse]

retained the common word they used to have for this animal. This fact also emphasizes the importance of the mechanism of cultural assimilation in the creation of languages, so that the migrations of people and the languages they speak are in many cases two independent events.

The problem with such a way of viewing the origin of languages is also evident from the words for two other animals, the *wolf* and the *bear*, for which an IE etymology is given.

Regarding the *bear*, the Greek word *arktos*, along with the corresponding Italian form *orso*, seems to differ from the German word *bär*, or the Russian word *medved*. The word is also different in Celtic languages, e.g., *mathan* in Scottish Gaelic.

Regarding the *wolf*, the same form appears to have significant spread across many European languages, for example, *lykos* in Greek, *lupus* in Latin, *wolf* in English, and so on. However, the word is different in other Indo-European languages, e.g., *blaidd* in Welsh, *faol* in Scottish Gaelic, *bhediya* in Hindi, etc.

Furthermore, the theory of linguistic replacement due to "taboo", that a word (e.g., *arktos*) is intentionally avoided and replaced by a descriptive name (e.g., *bär* = the brown one), instead of solving the problem of linguistic fragmentation, proves that language is a psychosocial phenomenon.

In contrast to the word for *wolf*, the fragmentation is more evident when comparing the word for *dog* in various IE languages, for example, *skylos* in Greek, *madra* in Irish Gaelic, *sobaka* in Russian, *sag* in Persian, *kutta* in Hindi, and so on.

The examination of various basic words, such as *wolf*, *bear*, or *dog*, shows that these words tend to be common across different linguistic groups of Europe or Western Asia; thus, it appears that these different groups had, in general terms, their own language, with whatever dialectal differences, regardless of the place of origin of these peoples. Furthermore, in many cases, as with the word *ippos* (horse), the similarities between different linguistic groups must be attributed to borrowing through their interaction.

The Basque word for the wolf, *otsoa*, which does not exist in any other language, may indicate that the form *lykos* or *lupus* is not of Paleolithic origin (although Basque in general is a language isolate). However, it is not of IE origin either, since in some linguistic groups (Celtic, Indic) it is different. It may be of "European" origin, and even then only partially, but not "Indo-European." This also shows how risky it is to assume large-scale linguistic continua during periods when there was neither extensive trade, nor great empires, nor a common ethnic identity to create them.

There are, however, some words that may originate from the distant past. A typical example is the word for the *circle*. I quote an informative excerpt from the *Encyclopedia of Religions*, by John G. R. Forlong:

gar- or *kar-*: an ancient root with the meaning "to encircle", or "to enclose". Akkadian *khar*, "round". Ancient Egyptian *ker*, "circle". Hebrew *gor*, "to turn/revolve". Arabic *kar*, "to turn". Ancient Persian *gar*, "to gather/assemble", also *kar*, "round, to turn, to run". Thus also many words related to "running", such as the Mongolian *kar*, "to run", the Akkadian *kurra*, or the Indic *ghora*, "horse", the Finnish *kars*, "to run", etc.[288]

Thus, we see that words related to the *circle* extend far beyond the boundaries of the IE languages, and that they trace back to an earlier period when a common concept for the "circle" was formed.

One last word, characteristic of its diachronicity and universality, is the word for *mother*. I present the following table from the website *Sentence First*,[289] with some additions and corrections:

---

[288] [https://books.google.gr/books?id=maSQ-4Ag5qsC&pg=PA128&lpg=PA128&dq=the+words+circle+in+akkadian&source=bl&ots=JnytLth8Sl&sig=-qmATJNgtPiM7neZ54F0dG-YGqM&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjCs7iBkbfKAhVDPhQKHV59DOsQ6AEILzAD#v=onepage&q=the%20words%20circle%20in%20akkadian&f=false]

[289] [http://stancarey.wordpress.com/2012/01/02/the-mamas-the-papas-in-babies-babbling/]

Kikuyu (Eastern Africa)	*nana*	Arabic	*umm*
Xhosa (South Africa)	*umama*	Hebrew	*imma*
Luo (Kenya)	*mama/miyo*	Inuktitut (Eastern Canada)	*anaana*
Hungarian	*anya*	Dakota (USA)	*ina*
Romanian	*mama*	Nahuatl (Mexico)	*nantli*
Welsh	*mam*	Pipil (El Salvador)	*nan*
Basque	*ama*	Kobon (New Guinea)	*nana*
Finnish	*aiti*	Malay (Southeast Asia)	*emak*
Turkish	*ana*	Urdu (South Asia)	*ammi*
Greek	*mana*	Tagalog (Philippines)	*nanay*
Chechen (Caucasus)	*naana*	Mandarin (China)	*muqin*

Some might say that such words are common in so many diverse languages because they are onomatopoeic. However, this alone does not explain the similarity, as other onomatopoeic words, such as murmur, gargle, splash, grunt, moo, bark, meow, cackle, etc., are different in different languages. Nor does it explain why the word for the *circle* has a common root in many Eurasian and Semitic languages. Furthermore, the similarity of the word for *mother* in so many different languages goes beyond the hypothesis of borrowing. Here, evidently, lies the difference, with whatever exceptions, between "similarity" and "universality".

© 2026 Chris C. Tselentis